SHONENJUMP MANGA

BARRAGE

2

KOUHEI HORIKOSHI

Thank you very much for picking up this graphic novel. I'd love to continue making a living drawing manga. (Check out the photo of the Cake of Doom I made last year!)

—KOUHEI HORIKOSHI, 2012

KOUHEI HORIKOSHI

was born in Aichi, Japan, in 1986. He received a Tezuka Award Honorable Mention in 2006, and after publishing several short stories in *Akamaru Jump*, his first serialized work in *Weekly Shonen Jump* was *Oumagadoki Doubutsuen* in 2010. *Barrage* is his second series in *Weekly Shonen Jump*.

BARRAGE

VOLUME 2

SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

Story and Art by
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RATED
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FOR
TEEN
PARENTAL ADVISORY
BARRAGE is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic and fantasy violence.
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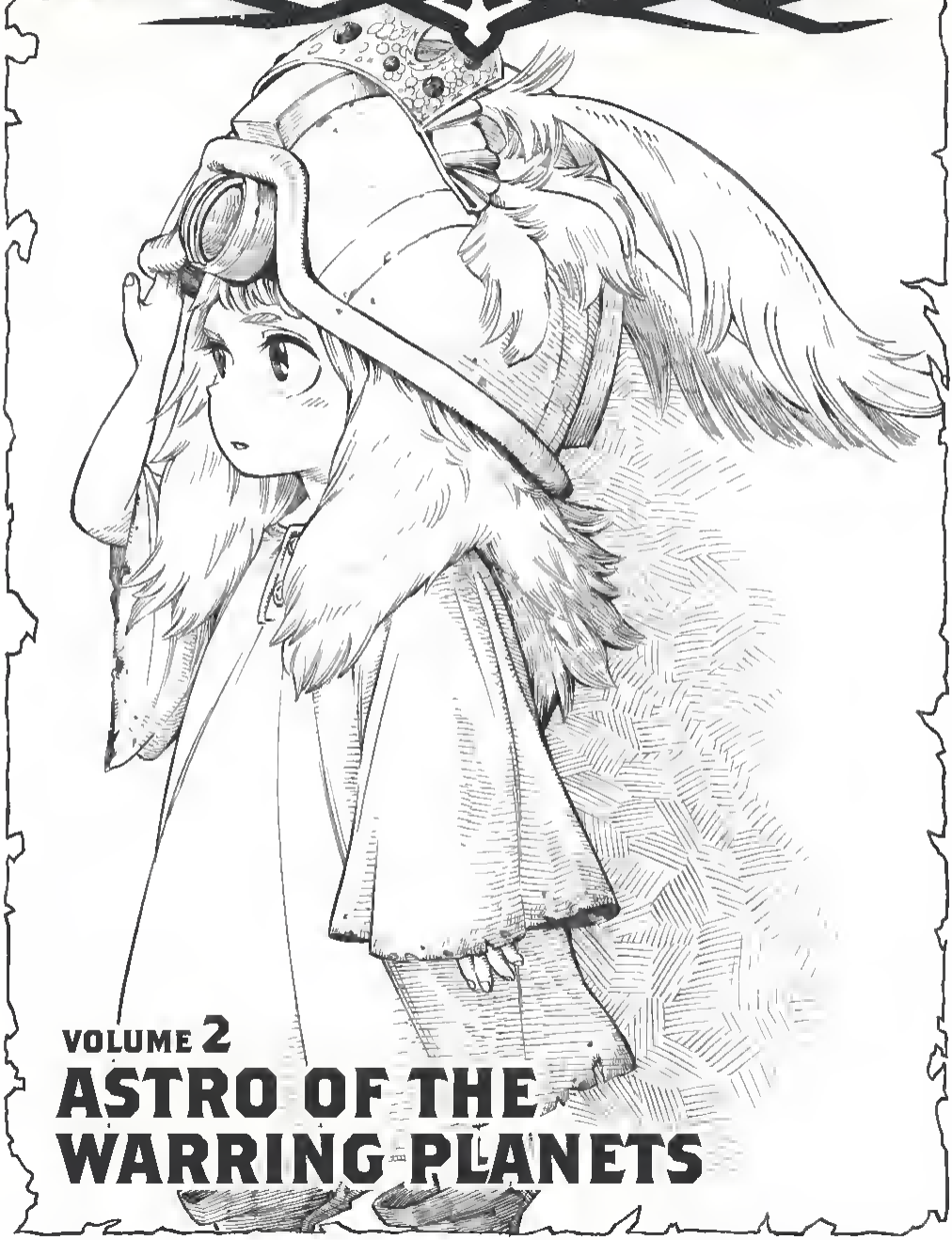
BARRAGE



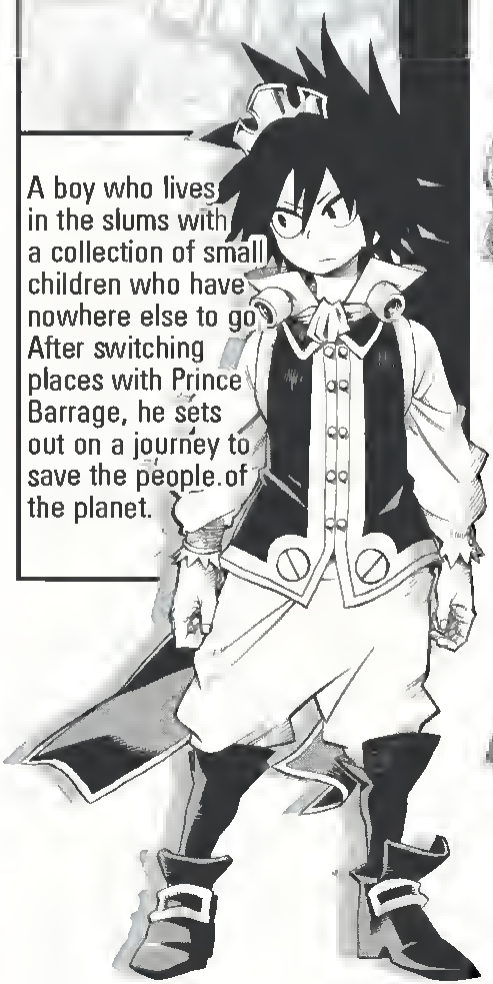
VOLUME 2

ASTRO OF THE WARRING PLANETS

STORY AND ART BY **KOUHEI HORIKOSHI**

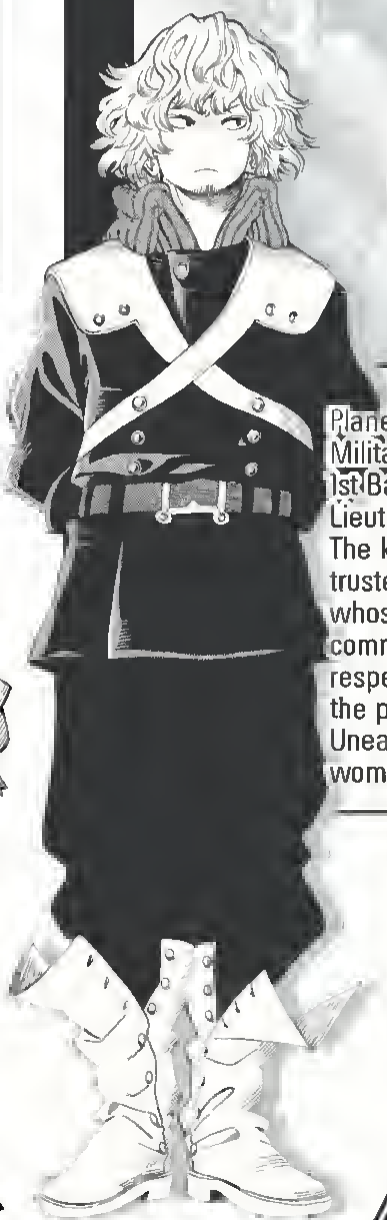
CHARACTERS

ASTRO



A boy who lives in the slums with a collection of small children who have nowhere else to go. After switching places with Prince Barrage, he sets out on a journey to save the people of the planet.

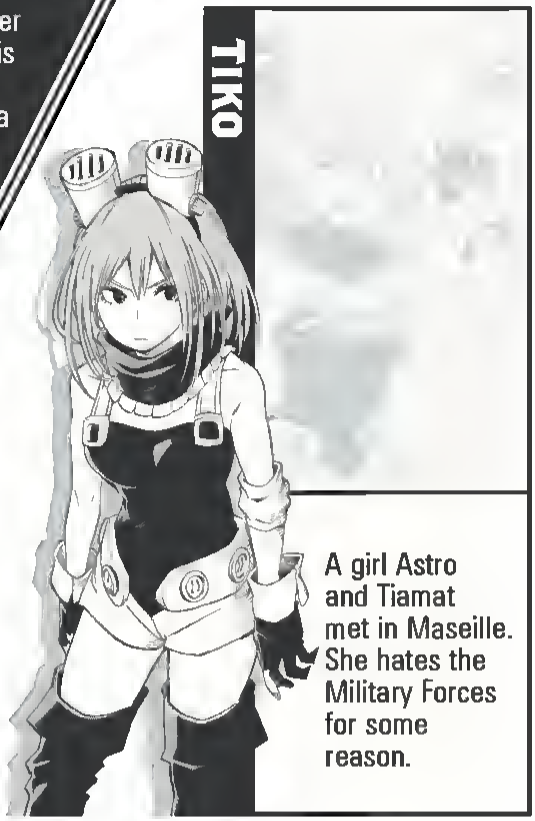
TIAMAT



Planetary Military Forces, 1st Battalion Lieutenant. The king's trusted knight whose name commands respect across the planet. Uneasy around women.

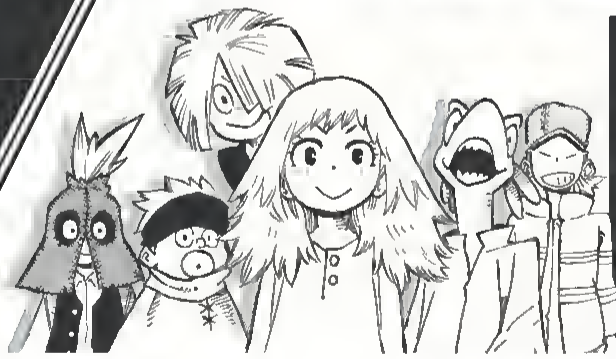
STORY

The planet Industria, once united under the peaceful rule of the royal family, is currently overrun by aliens. One day, Prince Barrage switches places with a slum kid named Astro, who is hauled off to the castle by mistake. After the king learns of the real prince's death, he asks Astro to take his place and bring peace to the war-torn planet. After all, Astro can wield the Orgue—a weapon that can only be used by those with the qualifications to be king. In order to protect his family, Astro agrees to set out on a journey to save the planet. But the moment he and Tiamat reach Maseille, they're attacked!



TIKO

A girl Astro and Tiamat met in Maseille. She hates the Military Forces for some reason.

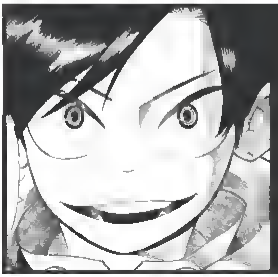


KIDS

Astro's happy family. From the left, their names are Okikuna, Sho, Little, Chima, Suntara, and Macro.

KING

The King of Industria. Reigned over Industria with the power of the Orgue. He asked Astro to take the prince's place.



BARRAGE

The Prince of Industria. He ran away from the castle and forced the Orgue on Astro before being assassinated.

BARRAGE

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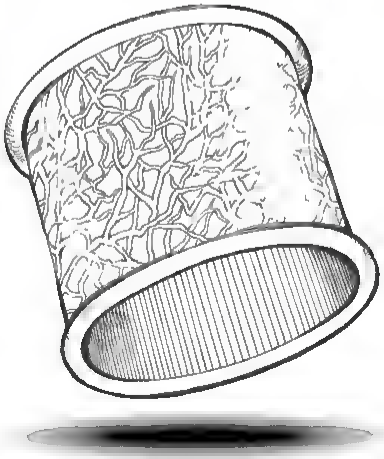
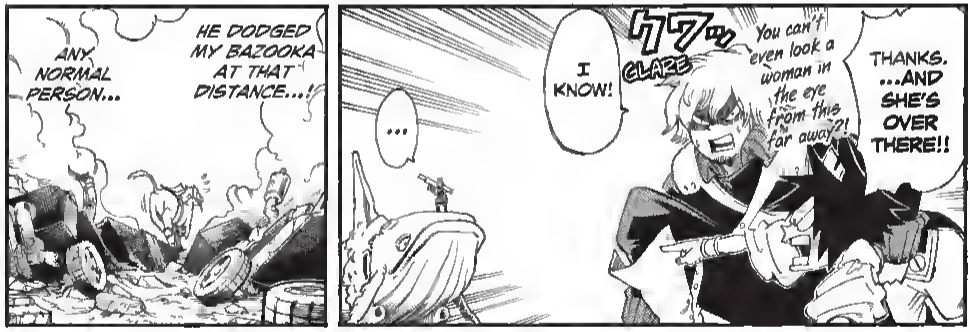


YOU MILITARY FORCES ARE THE BAD GUYS.
GWOOO
I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU TEAR THIS TOWN APART ANYMORE!
...
OKAY. I BETTER GET BACK TO TOWN BEFORE THEY COME BACK.
PAT
Chapter 8: Tiko

ガラ
ZOFF
WHAT DO YOU MEAN THE MILITARY FORCES ARE THE BAD GUYS?!
WAAAH, I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA DIE!!


ANY NORMAL PERSON...
HE DODGED MY BAZOOKA AT THAT DISTANCE...!
...
I KNOW!
クラーク
CLARE
You can't even look a woman in the eye from this far away?!
THANKS. ...AND SHE'S OVER THERE!!

?!
KLAK
THAT'S ENOUGH...
... PLAYING AROUND !!

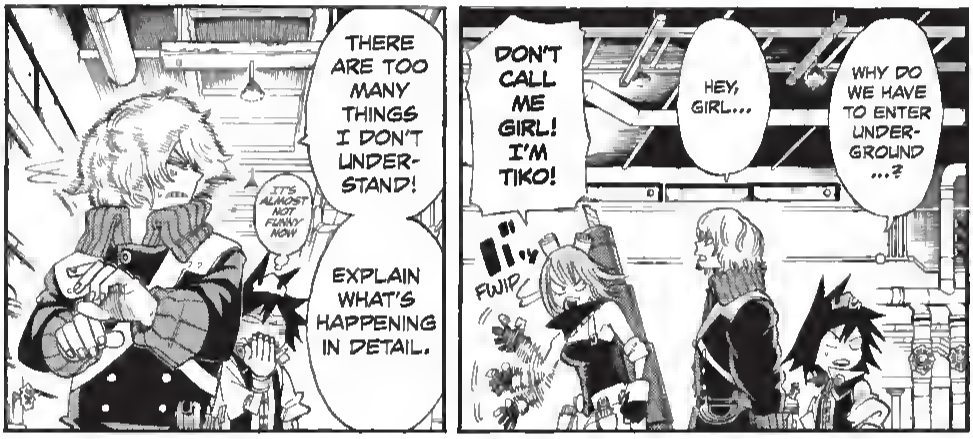
NOW CALM DOWN AND TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON.
I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF JAMMING IT WHEN I DODGED THE ATTACK.
VIP
SHE'S OVER THERE.
WHAT?!
BAM
KLAK
KLAK
SHUT YOUR TRAP !!
BOOSH
DASH
WHY, YOU...
TIAMAT IS SCARED OF WOMEN! I HAVE TO PROTECT HIM...
VSH
BUDDA BUDDA
WHAT? BUT WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING ...!
WHOA, SHE'S CHARGING US!!

ぷっぱ
B-Boooo...
--OOB!!
IT'S NOT PERVERT, IT'S AST-- I MEAN, THE PRINCE! I'M THE PRINCE!
YOU PERVERT! WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?! THIS GUY'S ERRAND BOY?!
FNA...?!
HYUH?!
ゴゴゴ
GWOOO
WHY WOULD THE PRINCE BE WANDERING AROUND A PLACE LIKE THIS? LIAR!
IT'S TRUE! WELL, NOT TRUE-TRUE BUT PRETTY TRUE AND... AAGH, THIS IS SUCH A PAIN!
PRINCE?!
YEAH! SEE!
BUT I'M JUST A STAND-IN!

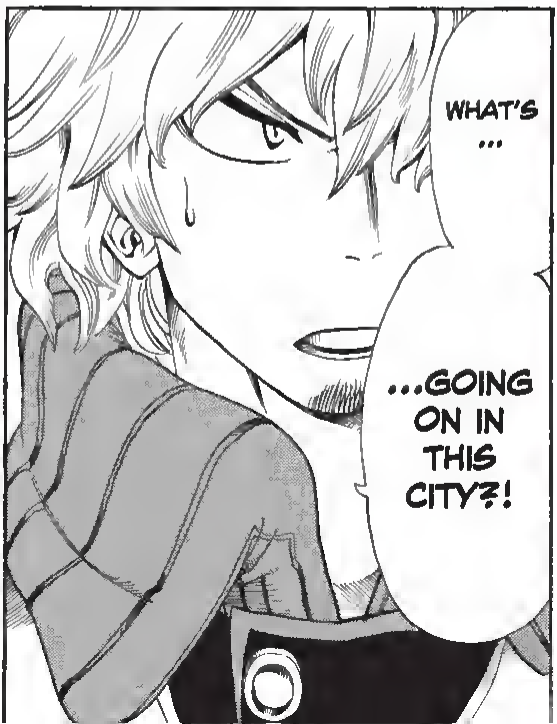
TIKO.
STOP IT. THOSE PEOPLE...
ZUSH...
...DON'T MEAN YOU ANY HARM.
LOOM
OKAY?
?!
MIRA.
PAT
IT TALKS?!
I'M A SPACE WHALE, AND HER FRIEND.
I APOLOGIZE FOR HOW HOTHEADED SHE'S been.
WHAT A POLITE WHALE! COOL!
POLITE IS COOL?
● SPACE WHALE
HIGHLY INTELLIGENT LIFE-FORM THAT MIGRATES FROM PLANET TO PLANET.
WHY ARE YOU TAKING THEIR SIDE?! THEY'RE OUR ENEMY...
IF THEY MEANT TO HURT YOU, TIKO...
...HE WOULD HAVE SHOT THAT BLADE INTO YOUR HEAD INSTEAD OF THE BAZOOKA.
AND THAT LITTLE BOY...
...TRIED TO PROTECT THAT BEARDED MAN FROM YOU, YOU KNOW?

MOST IMPORTANTLY...
THOSE AREN'T THE EYES OF SOMEONE WHO INTENDS TO DO HARM.
...
NOT THAT WAY.
COME WITH ME.
YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T LET US IN, BUT WE'RE GOING TO ENTER ANYWAY, OKAY?! OKAY?!
HEY... WAIT A MINUTE!!
...
T-T-TMP
I'VE BEEN OUT HERE FOR TOO LONG.
I HAVE TO GET BACK BEFORE THEY COME.

ギィ...
KRRK
ISN'T THE WHALE COMING WITH US?
I'M TOO LARGE. I'D GET SPOTTED IMMEDIATELY.
I USUALLY JUST WANDER AROUND THE AREA.
OKAY, TIKO. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF...


THERE ARE TOO MANY THINGS I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
IT'S ALMOST NOT FUNNY NOW
EXPLAIN WHAT'S HAPPENING IN DETAIL.
DON'T CALL ME GIRL! I'M TIKO!
HEY, GIRL...
WHY DO WE HAVE TO ENTER UNDERGROUND ...?
FWIP

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, DO YOU?
K222...
GBD

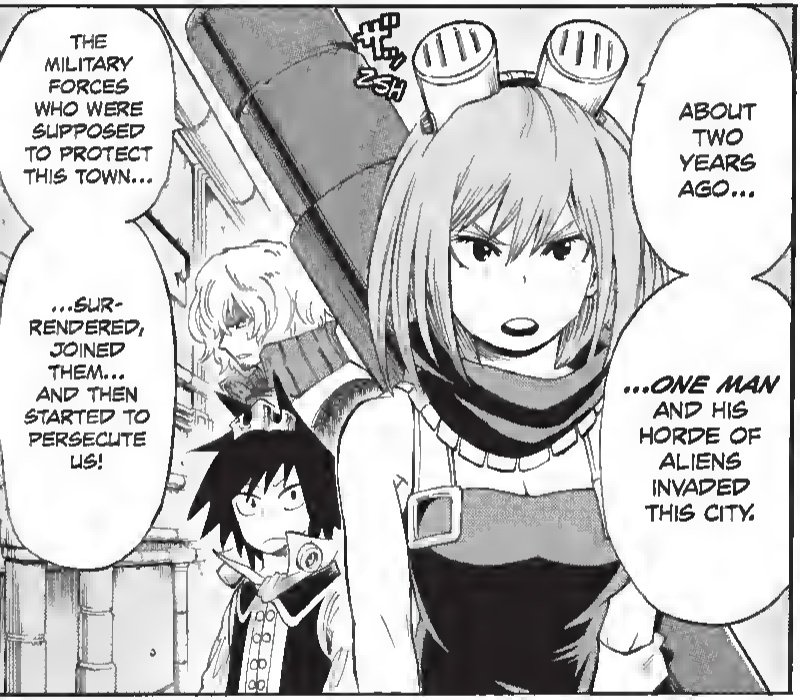

WHAT'S ...
...GOING ON IN THIS CITY?!

WHO WAS THAT ALIEN YOU WERE AFTER?!
WHY DO YOU CALL THE MILITARY FORCES, WHO PROTECT THIS CITY, YOUR ENEMY?!

SHFF
SHFF
IT HAPPENED AGES AGO.
THE TOWN WAS INVADED BY ALIENS.

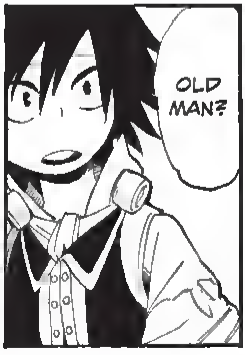
THIS PLACE IS SWARMING WITH ALIENS...!
IT WASN'T LIKE THIS WHEN I CAME HERE SOME YEARS AGO...
EVEN THE BUILDINGS ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!
!!
HEY, MILITARY FORCES!
MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE INVASION WERE KILLED.
IT WAS THE ALIENS...
...WHO REBUILT THE CITY.
DOING YOUR DUTIES? KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.
THE MILITARY FORCES?!!
YEAH. THERE WAS SOME TROUBLE OUTSIDE, SO...
HEY, WHAT? THEY'RE ACTING ALL FRIENDLY...
THAT'S WHY THEY'RE THE BAD GUYS!
...
THEY SENT FALSE REPORTS ...

GRRGH
HAVE THEY NO SHAME?!


THE MILITARY FORCES WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT THIS TOWN...
...SURRENDERED, JOINED THEM... AND THEN STARTED TO PERSECUTE US!
ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO...
...ONE MAN AND HIS HORDE OF ALIENS INVADED THIS CITY.

I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO ANGRY...

KCH


OLD MAN?

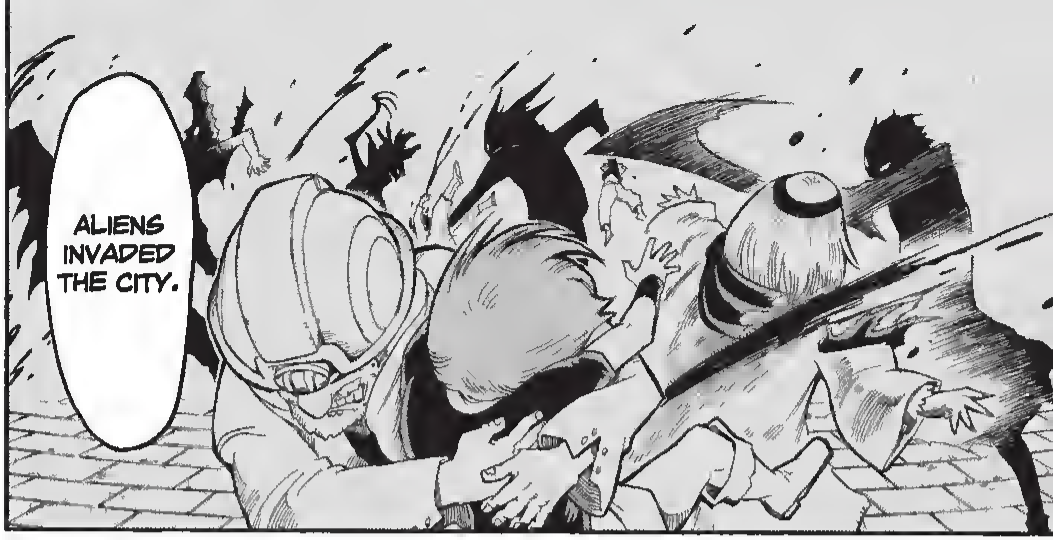
FOR MYSELF... AND FOR THE OLD MAN.
I'M GOING TO WIPE THEM OUT OF THIS CITY!

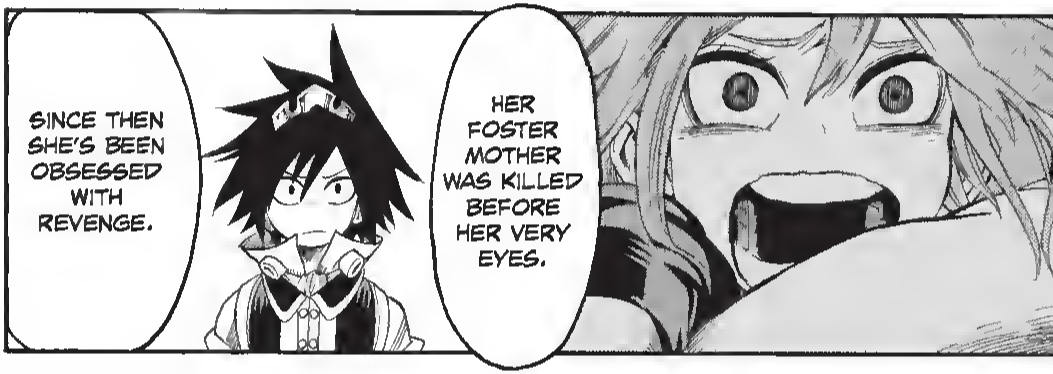
THERE'S A NETWORK OF STOCKROOMS BENEATH THIS CITY...
...AND THE CITIZENS LIVE WHERE THEY CAN DOWN HERE NOW.
OOH...
WOW. IT REALLY OPENED UP.
THERE YOU ARE, OLD MAN!!
TIKO!
ZOOM
THIS PLACE REMINDS ME OF MY HOME...
キョロ GLANCE
キョロ GLANCE
SO FAR IT'S BEEN BENEATH THE NOTICE OF THE INVADERS.

WERE YOU OUT HUNTING ALIENS AGAIN?! OH GEEZ, I TOLD YOU NOT TO DO THINGS LIKE THAT!
BADUM
Oh geez!
Oh geez!
OH GEEZ, THE WAY YOU DISAPPEAR ALL THE TIME WORRIES ME! YOU'RE NOT HURT, ARE YOU?!
YOU HAVE TO STOP DOING SUCH DANGER-OUS THINGS, OH GEEZ!
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH.
I'M FINE.
I WON'T DIE AS LONG AS THERE ARE STILL ALIENS TO GET RID OF.
OH, GEEZ... STOP THIS.
FORGET ABOUT THIS RE-VENGE.
NO! I WON'T! C'MON, YOU'RE AS UPSET AS I AM, AREN'T YOU?!
W-WHAT?
? ? ?
HN?

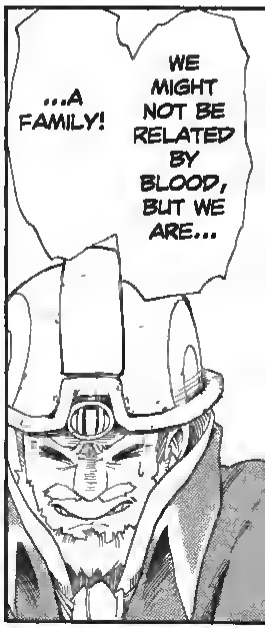
AAGGH, MILITARY FORCES!!
JOLT
ビクッ!!
HE'S A BUSY GUY.
OH RIGHT, THESE GUYS...
THE PRINCE ?!
I'M GETTING USED TO THIS REACTION ...
I'M GOING TO FIX MY BAZOOKA.
I HAVE TO PULL OUT THE BLADE YOU SHOVED INTO IT!
ク?!!
GLARE!!
WHOA ?!
HEY, OLD MAN, WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT TIKO GIRL ...?
JOLT!!
ビク!!
HUH?! OH... YES...
MY WIFE...
...WAS KILLED BY THE INVADERS.

A CHILD WHO LOSES THEIR FAMILY TO WAR.
WAR OR ...?
TIKO WAS A WAR ORPHAN WHO ESCAPED FROM A CONFLICT...
...IN A FAR-OFF COUNTRY.
THIS CITY GREW AROUND TRADE, AND MANY PEOPLE AND GOODS FLOWED THROUGH IT.
HER EYES HAD SEEN SO MANY HORRIBLE THINGS THAT THEY WERE EMPTY.
AT FIRST, SHE WOULDN'T OPEN UP TO US.
BUT EVENTUALLY HER NATURAL CHEER SHONE THROUGH...
...AND SHE OPENED UP TO US BIT BY BIT.
MY WIFE AND I FELT SO SORRY FOR HER THAT WE TOOK HER IN.
SHORTLY AFTER THAT...


ALIENS INVADED THE CITY.

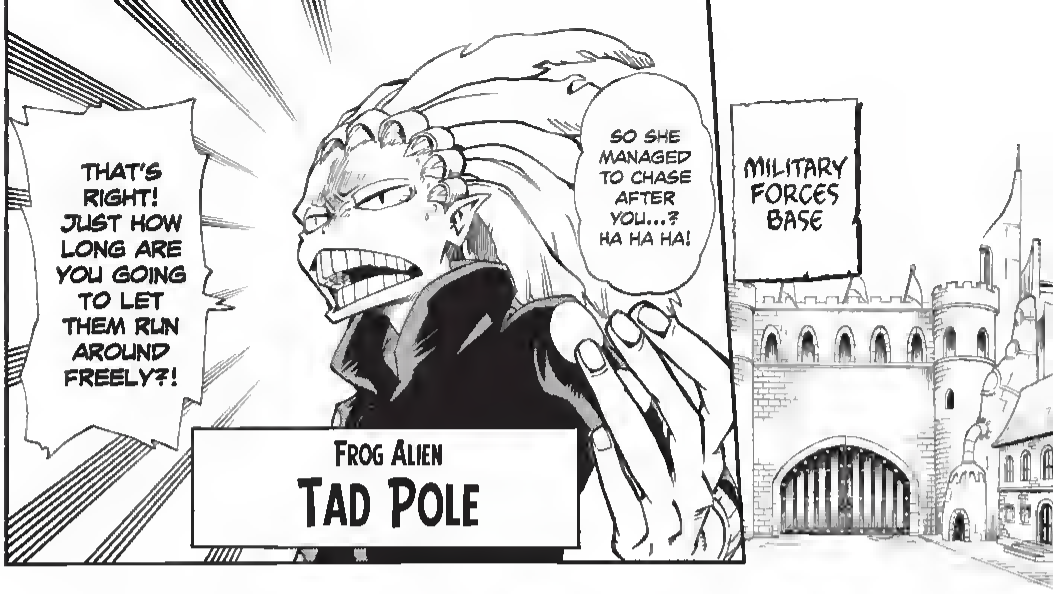

SINCE THEN SHE'S BEEN OBSESSED WITH REVENGE.
HER FOSTER MOTHER WAS KILLED BEFORE HER VERY EYES.

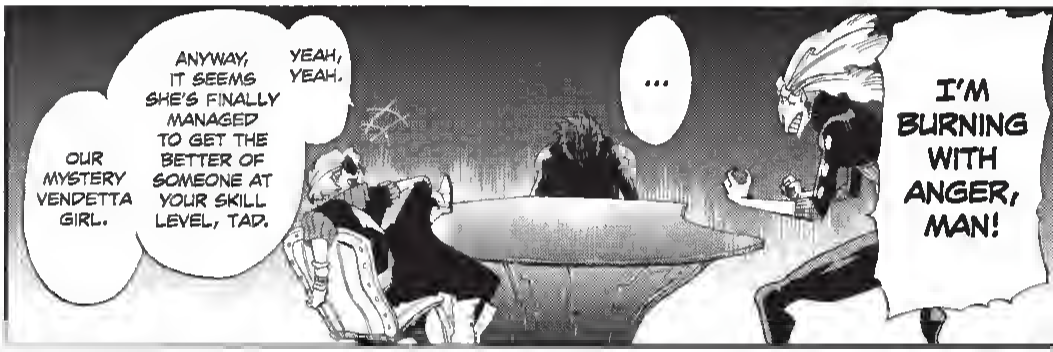
...TO HAVE AN EXPRES-SION LIKE THAT ON HER FACE...!
I DON'T WANT MY DAUGHTER ...


...A FAMILY!
WE MIGHT NOT BE RELATED BY BLOOD, BUT WE ARE...

!
LET'S GO BEAT UP THOSE INVADERS.
ZSH
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
CERTAINLY WE HAVE TO WIN BACK THE MILITARY FORCES BASE IN ORDER TO CONTACT THE CASTLE; BUT...
SOMETHING SEEMS DIFFERENT THIS TIME...
THAT GIRL ...
...IS LIKE ME.

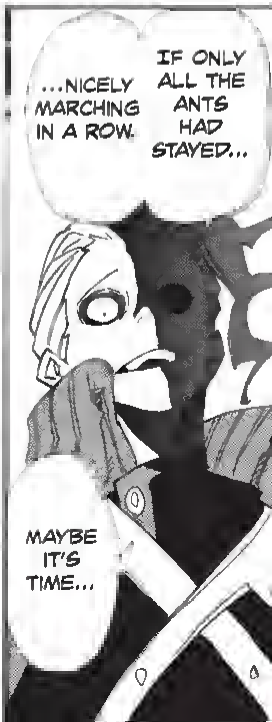
?!
I USED TO HAVE...
...SOMEONE LIKE A FATHER TOO.


THAT'S RIGHT! JUST HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO LET THEM RUN AROUND FREELY?!
SO SHE MANAGED TO CHASE AFTER YOU...? HA HA HA!
MILITARY FORCES BASE
FROG ALIEN
TAD POLE

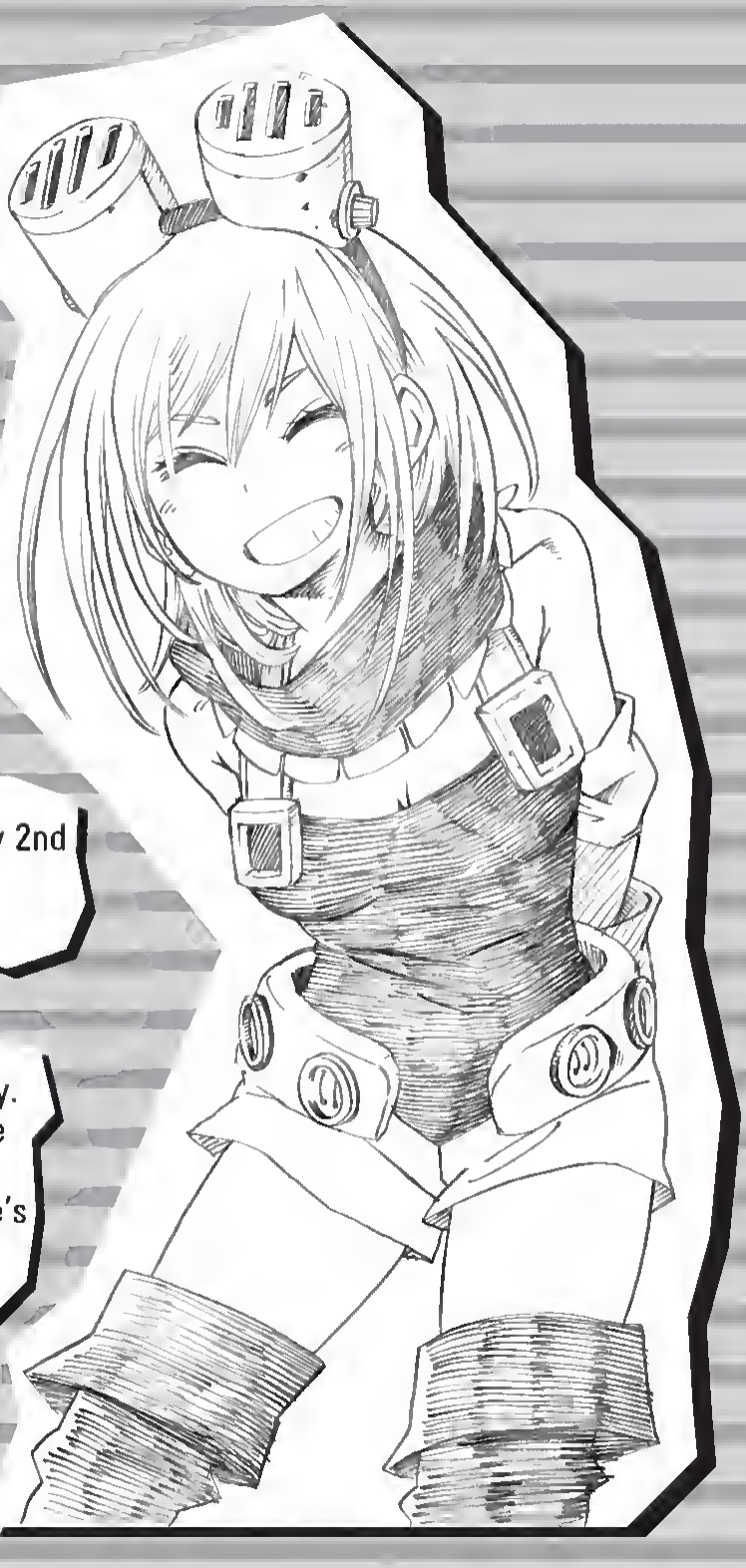

OUR MYSTERY VENDETTA GIRL.
ANYWAY, IT SEEMS SHE'S FINALLY MANAGED TO GET THE BETTER OF SOMEONE AT YOUR SKILL LEVEL, TAD.
YEAH, YEAH.
...
I'M BURNING WITH ANGER, MAN!

FIND OUT THE WHERE-ABOUTS OF THIS FOOL.
PLANETARY MILITARY FORCES, SIXTH BATTALION CAPTAIN.

IF ONLY SHE HAD KEPT QUIET...
WHAT A PITIFUL HUMAN.
...


...NICELY MARCHING IN A ROW.
IF ONLY ALL THE ANTS HAD STAYED...
MAYBE IT'S TIME...

ZSSH
WE WILL ENGULF THIS PLANET AND ITS PEOPLE WITH OUR DARKNESS...
SURE, OKAY.
NO PROBLEM.
PLANETARY MILITARY FORCES
6TH BATTALION CAPTAIN
KUKULKAN
I'M GONNA GIVE THAT MISSY A TASTE OF THE DARK!



TIKO

Age: 17

Birthday: January 2nd

Height: 5'04"

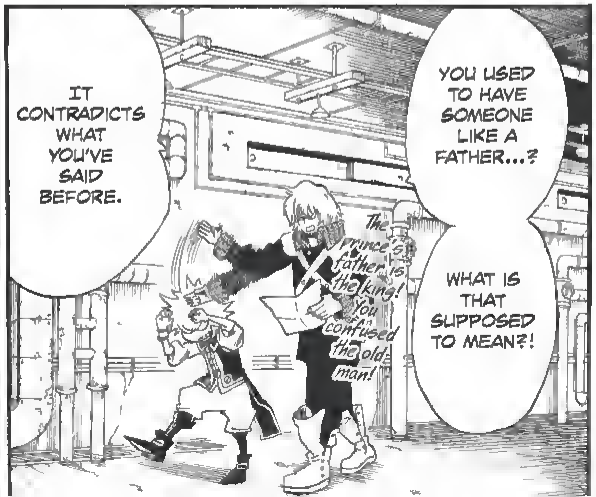
One stubborn lady. Her goggles were actually inspired by the alien noble's in chapter 1, but somehow along the way they became hers.

Chapter 9: Astro's Past

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?!
WHAK
WHAK
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LET PEOPLE KNOW YOU'RE A FAKE PRINCE?!

OW! THAT HURTS!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO ASKED ME WHAT WAS THE MATTER!

NO, IT DOESN'T! IT WAS AFTER ME AND THE KIDS BECAME A FAMILY!
AND HE WAS ONLY AROUND FOR LITTLE BIT!
STILL...


YOU USED TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE A FATHER...?
WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
IT CONTRADICTS WHAT YOU'VE SAID BEFORE.
The prince's father is the king! You confused the old man!

CASTLE TOWN SLUM
TWO YEARS AGO
I KNOW YOU GOT FOOD! HAND IT OVER!!
GSH
GURGH! NO!
SO YOU DO GOT FOOD !!
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING!
I GATHERED THESE SCRAPS FOR THE KIDS, NOT YOU!!
URRGH!
SPCH
IDIOT! DON'T GIMME A HARD TIME.
PANT
SOUR
PANT

AT THE TIME, I WAS BARELY MANAGING TO FEED THE KIDS.
...!
WORL
I NEED... TO FEED THEM...
DASH!
...THAT HE APPEARED IN FRONT OF ME.
DON
STEALING ISN'T RIGHT.
IT WAS THEN...
HEY.
SHF
WUMP!

MY FOOD ...!
WHO ARE YOU?
ONCE YOU CHOOSE TO FALL, YOU'LL NEVER STOP TUMBLING DOWN A BOTTOMLESS PIT!
I GATHERED THESE SCRAPS FOR THE KIDS, NOT YOU!!
I OVER-HEARD YOUR CONVERSA-TION WITH THIS SCUM.
...?
AFTER THAT, BLACK STARTED TO SHOW UP AT MY PLACE...
I'M BLACK, A MAN WHO DOES NOT PERMIT CROOKED BEHAVIOR.
YOU MUST NEVER BECOME CROOKED.
LOOM
ヌウン
...TO MEET SOMEONE LIKE YOU IN THIS DAY AND AGE.
IT'S RARE ...
HORNS ... YOU'RE AN ALIEN?

He's lookin' at me...
DUNNO. HE FOLLOWED ME HERE.
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO GIVE YOU, MISTER!
WHO'S THAT GUY, ASTRO?
I SEE... YOU LIVE WITH THESE HELPLESS CHILDREN.
ズン
LOOM
HUH?!
THIS LIFE OF YOURS WON'T LAST LONG.
A LIFE WITH NO CLEAR VIEW OF THE FUTURE... A CHILD FEEDING THE CHILDREN...
ONE MOLDY DUMPLING FOR DINNER, HUH...?
WHAT?!
ズイ
SHA
I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO LIVE.
ガ
ZUFF
WHAT DID YOU SAY ...?!

BLACK TAUGHT ME ALL SORTS OF THINGS.
LIKE HOW TO EARN MONEY...
...AND BUY FOOD WITH MONEY...
YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW BASIC THINGS LIKE THAT?
I'VE GIVEN YOU MY KNOWLEDGE.
?
YOU'RE SO PURE.
PURE?
THE KIDS HAVE BEEN REALLY HAPPY THESE DAYS BECAUSE THEY GET TO EAT CLEAN FOOD.
THANKS A LOT!
キャフ WHEE
キャフ WHEE
THOSE WERE HIS LAST WORDS TO ME.
TI PAT
STAY TRUE...
...TO THAT PURE SOUL OF YOURS.

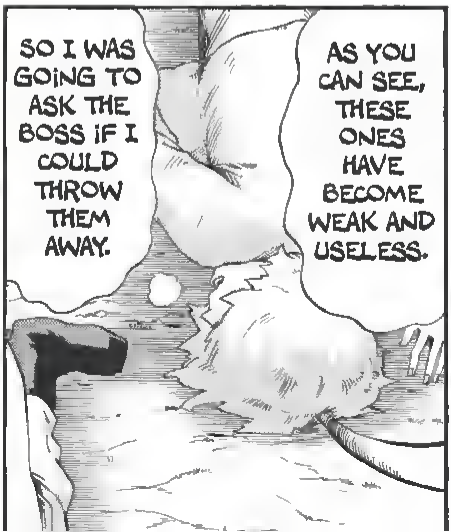
SOUNDS LIKE A STRANGE MAN.
BLACK NEVER CAME BACK AFTER THAT.
...I WAS ABLE TO KEEP LIVING WITH THE KIDS.
BUT THANKS TO BLACK...
YEAH ...
I'M GLAD YOU'RE RILED UP.
BUT WE NEED TO BE CAREFUL NOW. REMOVE YOUR CROWN.
KRCH
?!
SO HER ENEMIES ARE MY ENEMIES!
AND I HAD MY FAMILY TOO.
EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE NOT RELATED BY BLOOD, TIKO AND THE OLD MAN ARE FAMILY.

FROM WHAT THE OLD MAN TOLD US, THE NUMBER OF ENEMIES AND THEIR MOTIVE ARE UNCLEAR. ONE THING WE DO KNOW...
SHFF...
...
SO WHAT?
...HAPPENS TO USE THE MILITARY FORCES BASE THAT WE ARE AFTER AS THEIR COMMAND CENTER.
...IS THAT THE MAN WHO LEADS THESE INVADERS...
THAT MEANS WALKING STRAIGHT THROUGH TOWN WITHOUT AROUSING ANY SUSPICION.
THIS TIME, WE'RE GOING TO BYPASS ALL THE SOLDIERS ...
...AND GO DIRECTLY AFTER THEIR LEADER!

LIKE THIS.
HOW ARE WE GOING TO DO THAT?!
ZUFF
WHAAAAT?!
B-BMP
B-BMP
B-BMP
THAT'S GREAT ...
I SEE...! THEY WON'T SUSPECT HIM SINCE HE'S WEARING A MILITARY FORCES UNIFORM!
Ooh!
HE'S A THIEF. I'M TAKING HIM TO OUR BOSS.
DMP
DMP
HEY, MILITARY FORCES. WHAT'S WITH THAT KID?

I HAPPEN TO NEED SOME NEW SLAVES.
DRAG
ズル
DRAG
ズル

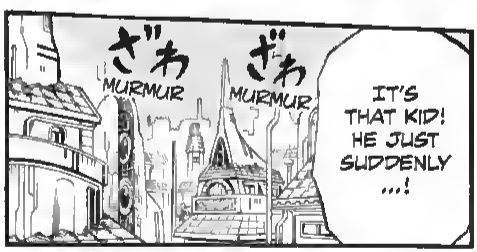
I'M SURE HE'LL SAY YES.
AHYA
HYA


SO I WAS GOING TO ASK THE BOSS IF I COULD THROW THEM AWAY.
AS YOU CAN SEE, THESE ONES HAVE BECOME WEAK AND USELESS.

!!

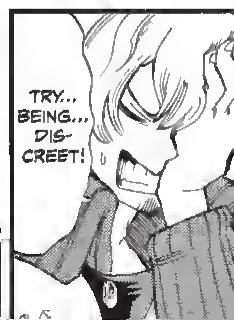
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THESE ALIENS ...?!
IT'S AS IF THEIR MOTIVE IS TO TORMENT THESE PEOPLE ...!
MEANING THAT THE SURVIVORS BECAME SLAVES.
MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE INVASION WERE KILLED.
...
FINE!!
TUG
THAT KID CAN TAKE THEIR PLACE...
GAK...
...IN GROOMING MY FUR HAND HIM OVER!
COME AND GET ME!!
SHA
OOH, A LIVELY ONE.

ZZRT
GYAA!!


ざわ
MURMUR
ざわ
MURMUR
IT'S THAT KID! HE JUST SUDDENLY ...!

WHAT THE HECK?
HE GOT FRIED!

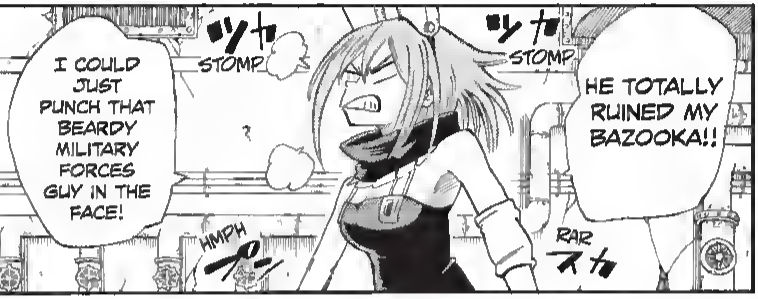
ぞろ
TUMP...
WE HAVE NO CHOICE...

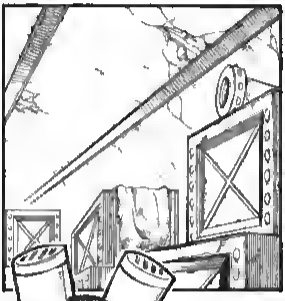

TRY... BEING... DIS-CREET!

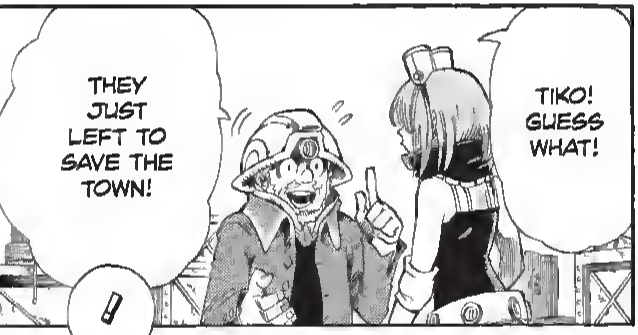
GWOO...
NEITHER ARE YOU!!
YOU'RE NOT FROM THIS TOWN, ARE YOU?!
BWUSH

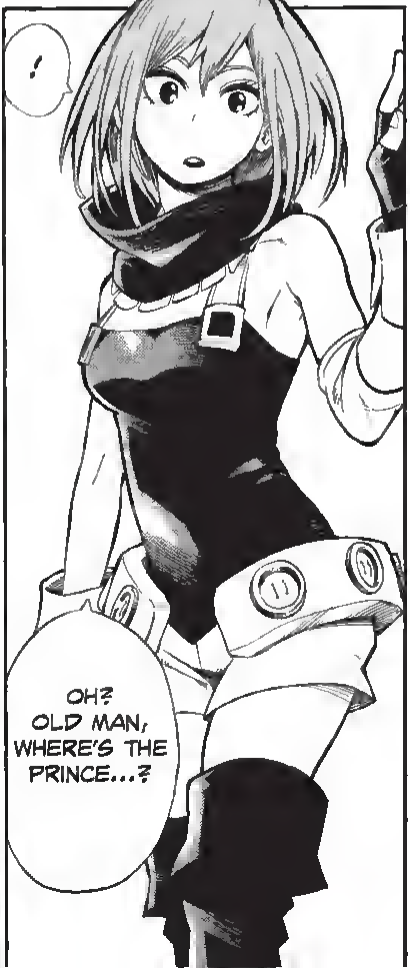
NGK!
GOOD. HE'S STILL ALIVE.
ANYONE WHO EVEN GOT SKIMMED WAS KNOCKED DOWN!
BADAM
WHAT IS THAT SPEAR?!
YEARGH!
HRNGH!
BOOSH
OKAY. GOT--
RRMB...
!
HEY! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE MORE ARRIVE!

WHAT?!
BOOOM


I COULD JUST PUNCH THAT BEARDY MILITARY FORCES GUY IN THE FACE!
STOMP
STOMP
HMPH
HE TOTALLY RUINED MY BAZOOKA!!
RAR



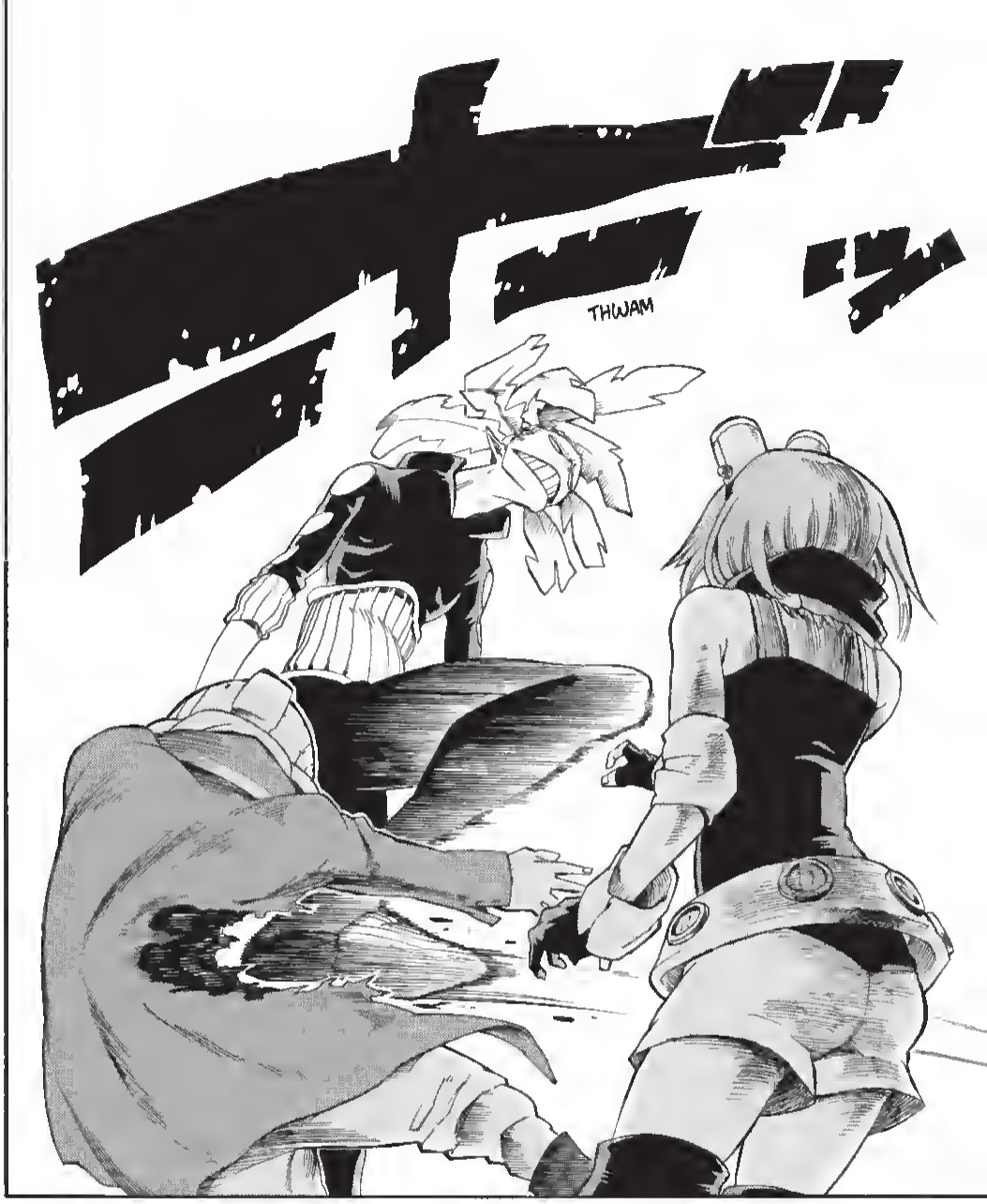

THEY JUST LEFT TO SAVE THE TOWN!
!
TIKO! GUESS WHAT!

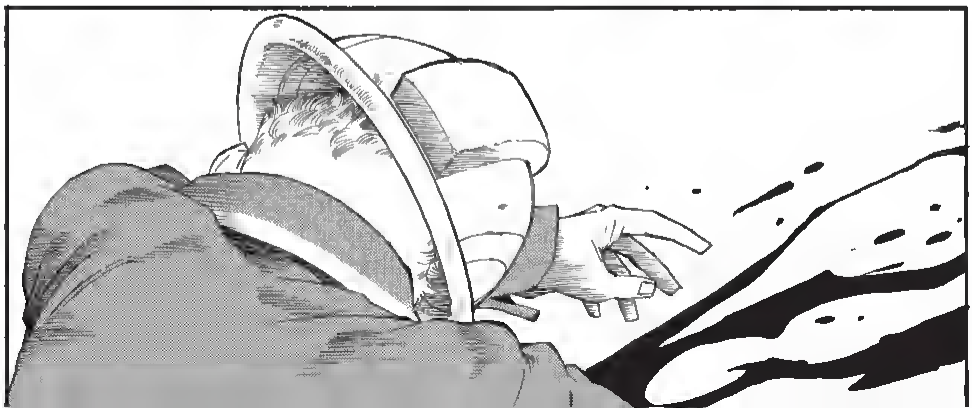

!
OH? OLD MAN, WHERE'S THE PRINCE...?

SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING DANGEROUS ANYMORE!
WE CAN TRUST IN THEM!
BOOM...
TNK

FOUND YOU!
CRRSH

?!
VEN-DETTA GIRL!!
SHUP
WE'VE LET YOU GO UNTIL NOW, MISSY. BUT YOU WENT TOO FAR.
AH...
SWF...
HE BROKE THROUGH THE CEILING?! NO WAY!
WE'RE UNDER 30 FEET OF BEDROCK!
OLD MAN!
VSH
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO HAVE HER!! NEVER!! SHE'S MY D--
HE CAME TO KILL TIKO!

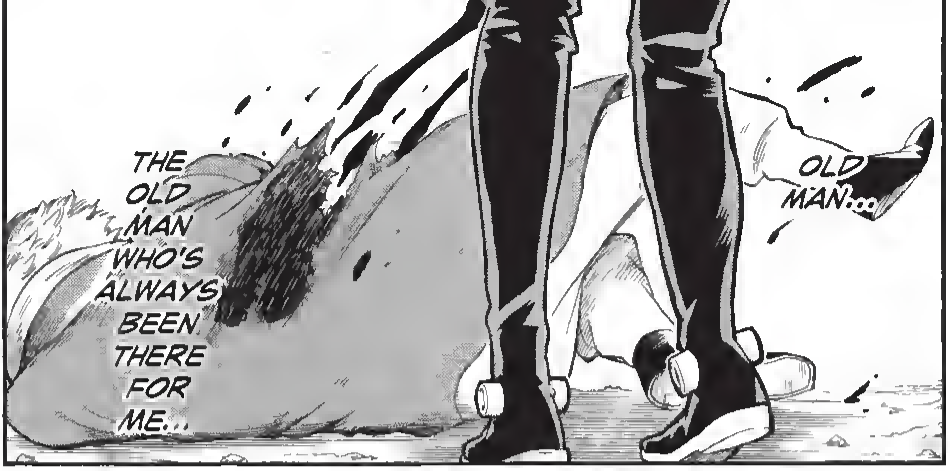

THUJAM



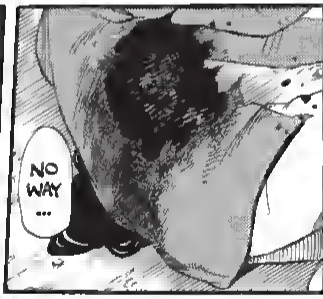
I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU, GEEZER.
NOW THEN...
...WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH YOU?

Totally Unrelated Illustration Corner

Chapter 10: Dark Energy

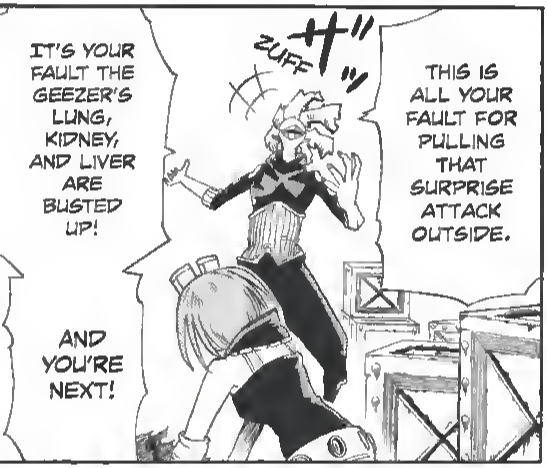

THE OLD MAN WHO'S ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR ME...
OLD MAN...

HEY, ISN'T THIS WHAT THEY CALL... HA HA...
NO?!
... GETTING A TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE?

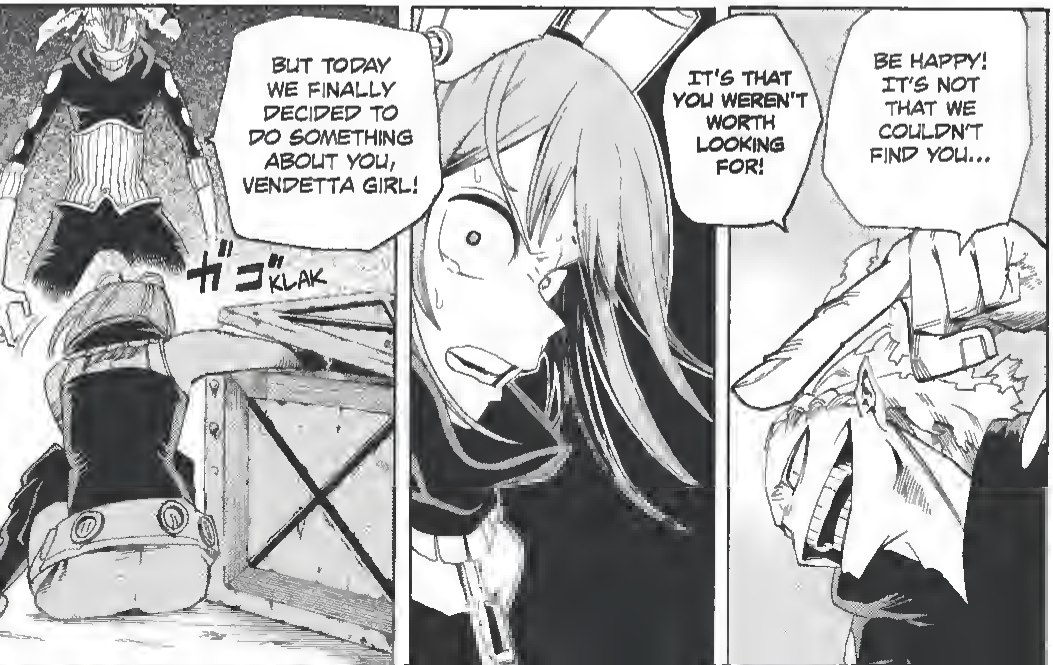

NO WAY ...

NO ...
WAIT ...
NO ...

OLD MAN!
!!
SHA
HUFF ...
GACK!
GASP!


IT'S YOUR FAULT THE GEEZER'S LUNG, KIDNEY, AND LIVER ARE BUSTED UP!
AND YOU'RE NEXT!
ZUFF
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT FOR PULLING THAT SURPRISE ATTACK OUTSIDE.

DON'T TALK! YOU'LL JUST BLEED MORE!
I CAN'T ...!
BREATHE ...! HUFF!

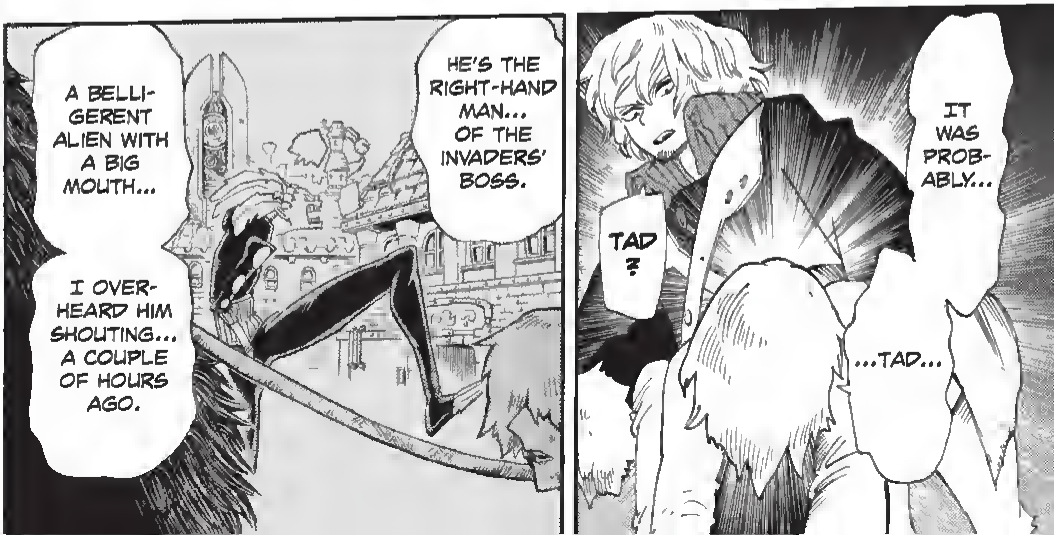

BUT TODAY WE FINALLY DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT YOU, VENDETTA GIRL!
KLAK
IT'S THAT YOU WEREN'T WORTH LOOKING FOR!
BE HAPPY! IT'S NOT THAT WE COULDN'T FIND YOU...

EAT LEAD !!
ドリドリ
BLAM
BOOSH
!!
I'M STILL TALKIN' TO YOU!!
THE BULLET ...!!
FSSSH...
?!

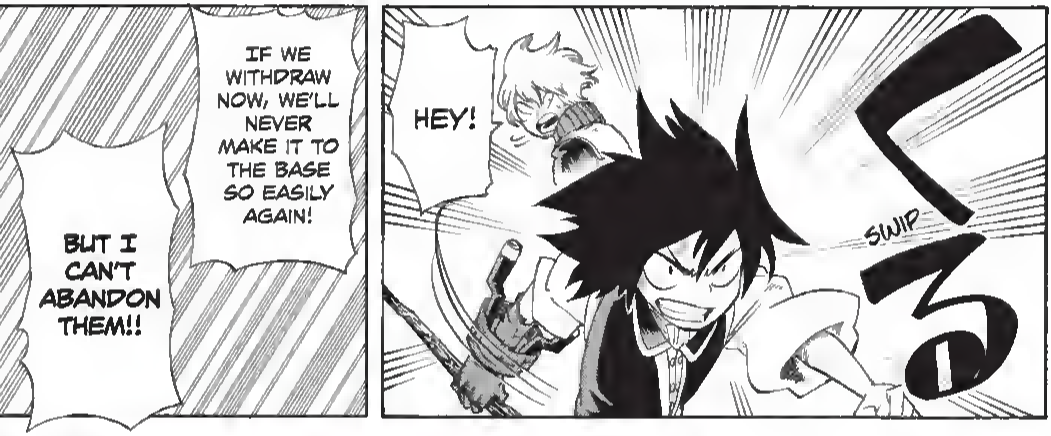
VENDETTA GIRL, WE'RE NOT THE REASON...
...YOU AND THE OLD MAN ARE GOING TO DIE. UNDER-STAND?
NGH!!
IT'S...
...BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO WEAK.
WHAM

SWOOSH

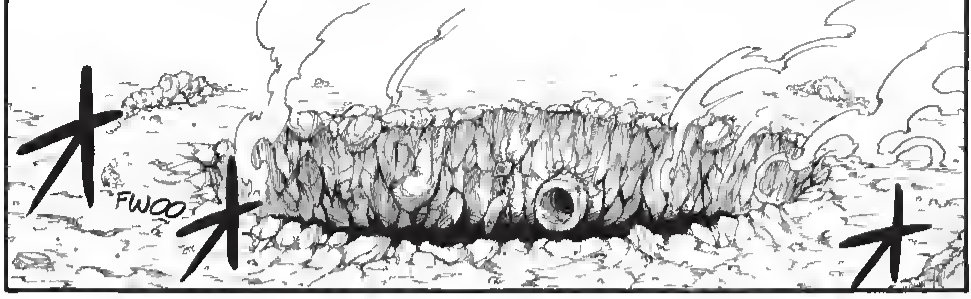
STILL... WHAT WAS THAT BOOM?
THERE'S NO TIME TO HIDE! JUST RUN!
THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM!!


A BELLI-GERENT ALIEN WITH A BIG MOUTH...
I OVER-HEARD HIM SHOUTING... A COUPLE OF HOURS AGO.
HE'S THE RIGHT-HAND MAN... OF THE INVADERS' BOSS.
TAD ?
...TAD...
IT WAS PROB-ABLY...

ABOUT HOW HE WAS GOING TO FIND THAT VENDETTA GIRL AND KILL HER...
THEY ...
...TRAMPLE EVERY-ONE WHO STANDS UP TO THEM.
LIKE ME.


HEY!
SWIP
IF WE WITHDRAW NOW, WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO THE BASE SO EASILY AGAIN!
BUT I CAN'T ABANDON THEM!!

THAT GIRL IS LIKE ME.
YOU ALWAYS LET YOUR EMOTIONS CONTROL YOU!
TIKO AND THE OLD MAN ...!


FWOO

C'MON, YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THIS, VENDETTA GIRL.
THUMP

I DON'T WANT REVENGE.
NO! I WON'T!
NO. IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, OLD MAN. I...!
GASP
FORGET ABOUT THIS REVENGE.
THE KIND, FUNNY OLD MAN WHO ADOPTED ME AND RAISED ME...
HUNH ?
I...
I just wanted to repay your kindness.
...IT'S TIME TO FINISH YOU OFF.
ZSSH
NOW THAT YOU'RE BEATEN AND YOUR HEART IS BROKEN...
PERFECTO!
SHUR
SHUR

YOU CAN STILL MOVE?
GET YOUR FOOT OFF HER.
GRAB
...MY LITTLE GIRL.
DON'T TOUCH ...
HUFF
HUFF
OLD MAN ...!

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU TO BUTT OUT?!
ズズズズ
VSH
NOOO!!

KRACHAA
?!
BULL'S-EYE!
WHOA-AAH!
ROLL ROLL
ゴロゴロ

ZUFF
TIKO! OLD MAN! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
FWUMP
STOP ACTING BEFORE YOU THINK!
I SAW THAT SOMEONE MADE A HUGE HOLE IN THE GROUND, SO I JUMPED IN!
HEY, YOU'RE HURT!
THE PRINCE...? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?!
I CAN GIVE HIM FIRST AID, BUT IS THERE A DOCTOR DOWN HERE?
SHUP
IT'S TOO...
MOST OF HIS ORGANS ARE...
THIS IS...
SHOOR
HE'S... HE'S...!
FORGET ABOUT ME! TAKE CARE OF THE OLD MAN!!

BUT I HIT HIM!
WHAT ...?!
LOOM
THAT HURT.
WHO ...
... ARE YOU BAS-TARDS ?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU PULLED, BUT DARK ENERGY...
SHA!!
...IS INVIN-CIBLE.
THERE'S A WOUNDED PERSON BEHIND ME! I HAVE TO DEFEND INSTEAD OF DODGE, BUT...
DARK ENERGY! I KNEW IT.

YOU JERK!
WAIT, YOU MORON!
BOOSH
THAT WAS TOO FAST TO SEE!
AST— PRINCE BARRAGE !!
KRRSH!

PRINCE?
SUCH DEVASTATING POWER THAT EVEN THE ORGUE HAD NO EFFECT...
GRCH...
I'VE HEARD OF IT BEFORE, BUT I NEVER EXPECTED IT TO BE SO STRONG.
THIS DARK ENERGY.
...?

YOU KNOW YOUR STUFF! EXACTLY! IT'S AN INVISIBLE ENERGY...
... CONSTANTLY RAINING DOWN FROM OUTER SPACE.
I'VE UNDERGONE SPECIAL TRAINING TO HOLD THAT ENERGY INSIDE MY BODY...
IT'S A MYSTERIOUS ENERGY SAID TO SHAPE THE UNIVERSE.
...WHICH GIVES ME ACCESS TO POWER BEYOND THE LIMITS OF ANY LIFE-FORM.
ZWOSH

THAT'S NOT GOOD FOR ASTRO!
...I CAN ABSORB DARK ENERGY TO BEEF UP MY BODY IN ANY WAY I WANT!
スウー
JUST LIKE... ... BREATHING OXYGEN TO POWER YOUR BODY...
ZFF
TWO IDIOTS STROLLING AROUND WITH THE TREASURE CAPABLE OF CONQUERING THE PLANET. WHAT A JOKE!
!
YOU TWO ARE FROM INDUSTRIA, AREN'T YOU? KUKULKAN TOLD ME ABOUT YOU.
HE RECEIVED A DIRECT HIT...!!
SHHH
... YOU'RE GONNA DIE.
YOU'RE NOT TAKING THIS STUFF SERIOUSLY. AND FOR THAT...
JUST LIKE THE GEEZER ABOUT TO KICK THE BUCKET OVER THERE!!

HE'S ALIVE ...
!
NOBODY'S DEAD YET!!
GWOOO
HFF!
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO WASTE LISTENING TO YOU...
THE KICK DIDN'T STRIKE HIM, IT STRUCK THE ORGUE!!
THE ORGUE IS BENT ...!

I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU KILL THE OLD MAN OR TIKO!

TAD POLE

Age: 20

Birthday: November 30th

Height: 8'09"

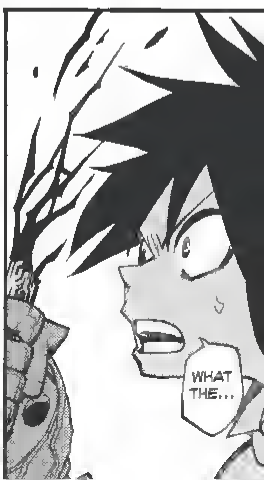
The cannon fodder.
He's strong,
but he's still the
cannon fodder.

Chapter 11: The Orgue Reanimates

OVER HERE !!
DASH
VSH
OVER HERE !!
I'M HERE TO KILL HER! THEY CAN'T JUST GET AWAY!
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE!
GIRL... AND YOU OTHER TWO!
IF THE ORGUE HAS NO EFFECT... ASTRO CAN'T DEFEAT HIM ALONE!
TAKE THE OLD MAN AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT!

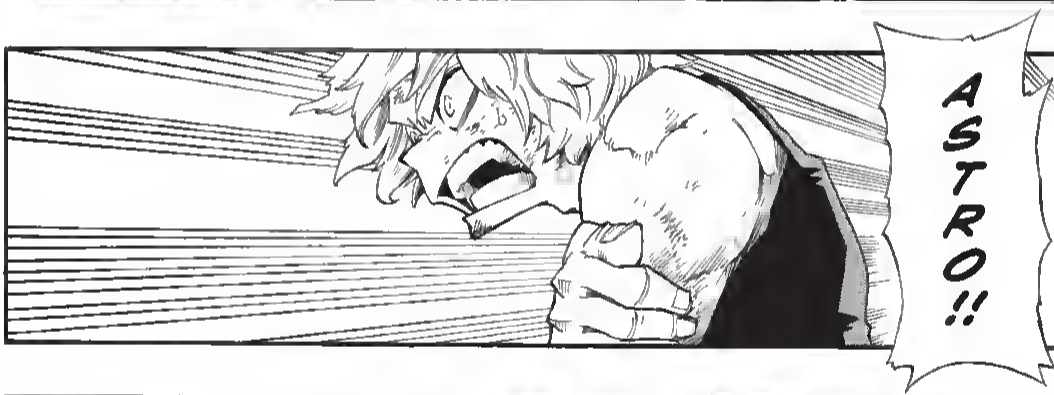
ガ
ガ
GWOOSH
ガ
ン
!!

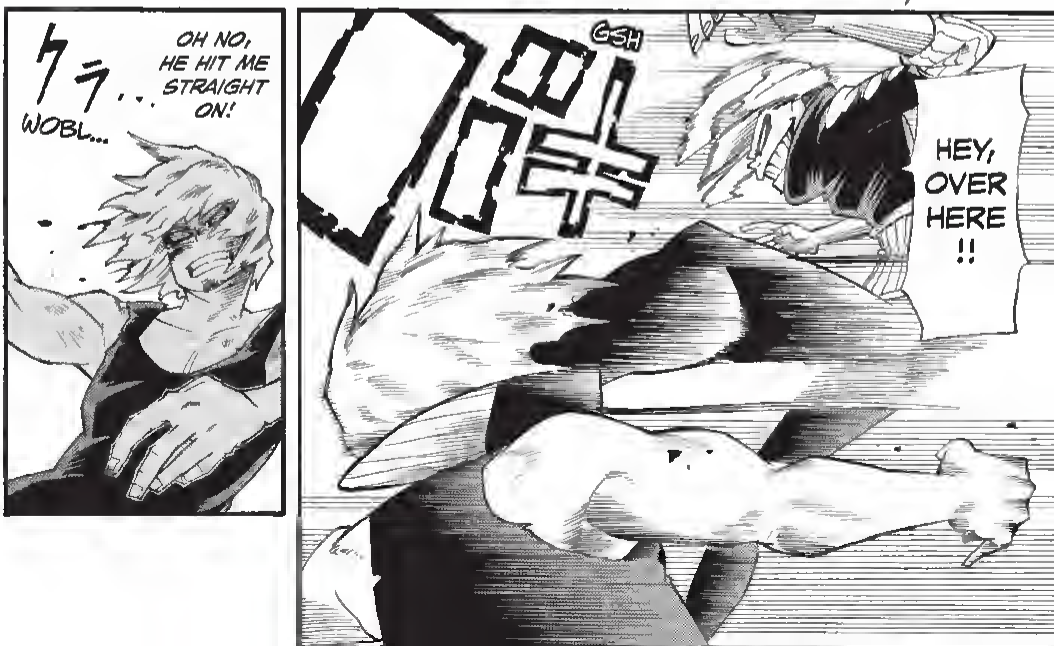
IF YOU CAN'T READ MY MOVES ...
YOU'RE OUT.
VOO...


WHAT THE...

GWOOSH
THE BEARD GUY BLOCKED
OH ?!
SHUP
YOU READ MY MOVES, HUH? NOT BAD.
CROOSH

...WAS ALL TALK.
SLUMP...
BUT LIKE I THOUGHT, THE PRINCE...


ASTRO!!


OH NO, HE HIT ME STRAIGHT ON!
WOBL...
GSH
HEY, OVER HERE !!

This guy!
WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE AFTER ...?!
I'LL KICK THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS OUT OF YOU AFTERWARDS, SO STAY THERE.
THUD
WHAT ...
...IS YOUR...
... GOAL ?!
ALL YOU SEEM TO DO IS TORMENT THE CIVILIANS, AND...
...BUT YOU'VE MASKED YOUR INVASION BEHIND THE MILITARY FORCES.
YOU HAVE SUCH INCREDIBLE STRENGTH...
THE ORGUE IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU BUT YOU'RE NOT THE SLIGHTEST BIT INTERESTED!
SHA...
!
DESTRUCTION.
THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO SAY.

アオオ!!
GWOOO
SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.
ALL RIGHT!!
WHAT DOES THAT~
グラ
WOBL
ザッ
ZUFF

YOUR HEART IS BROKEN...
...AND YOU'RE TOO AFRAID TO HATE ME.
YES, I LOVE THE EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE.
SMIRK

....!

HEY, YOU!
RUN!!
STAND UP AND RUN!
DARK ENERGY!
ZSH
STAND UP, TIKO!!
IT'S TOO LATE.
BYE.
YOU'LL DIE!!

I HATE PEOPLE WHO DESTROY FAMILIES.
THAT'S WHY I ACCEPTED THE ROLE OF PRINCE BARRAGE.
WHAT AM I LYING ON THE GROUND FOR...?
I CAN'T MOVE...
I HAVE TO SAVE HER, BUT...
I HAVE TO SAVE HER...
I WANTED TO BECOME STRONG.
...I REALIZED I COULDN'T SAVE PEOPLE IF I WAS WEAK.
WHEN I FOUGHT THAT ROCK ALIEN...
GRRT...
BUT NOTHING...
NOTHING ABOUT ME HAS CHANGED!

THAT'S WHY!..
ZSSH ズズ...
I HAVE TO MOVE!
TH-THMP
I HAVE TO SAVE HER!!
I'M SORRY ...
OLD MAN ...

...I BECAME THE PRINCE!
?!
SHIDDEN
THE ORGUE!
WHOA!
IT CHANGED SHAPE!
ZZZSH
BWOOOSH

BADAM
IT REANIMATED!
I'M GONNA SAVE HER!
A SWORD...
...EVEN THOUGH IT WAS REINFORCED WITH DARK ENERGY!
THAT ATTACK TOOK A PIECE OFF MY LEG...

SHA
GET AWAY FROM TIKO!
ARGH, YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING!
HE BROKE THROUGH MY DARK ENERGY...
HAAA!
PRINCE BARRAGE ...
!
BOOSH

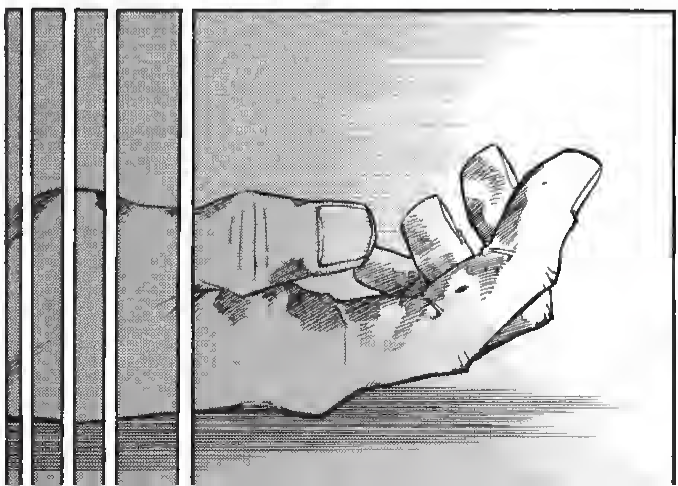
HE'S GONE!!
フラ...
WOBL..
ガク...
TMP...
ズズ...
ZSH...
DAMN IT...!
DAMN IT!!
TNK
TNK
HE RETREATED THE MOMENT HE KNEW HE WAS IN TROUBLE...
OLD MAN!!
OLD MAN?!
HUFF...
I DON'T KNOW...
WHAT JUST HAPPENED TO THE ORGUE?!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
WOBL

THIS'LL BE THE FIRST... AND LAST TIME...
WHAT ...?!
TIKO...
OPEN YOUR EYES!
SLAP
AND GIVE YOU AN ORDER.
THAT I PUNISH YOU.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS... NEVER GIVE UP...!
LISTEN HERE...
I'M SORRY ...
OLD MAN ...
YOU GAVE UP, DIDN'T YOU...?

WATCHING MY CHILD GIVE UP ON LIFE...
...IS FAR MORE PAINFUL THAN DYING MYSELF.

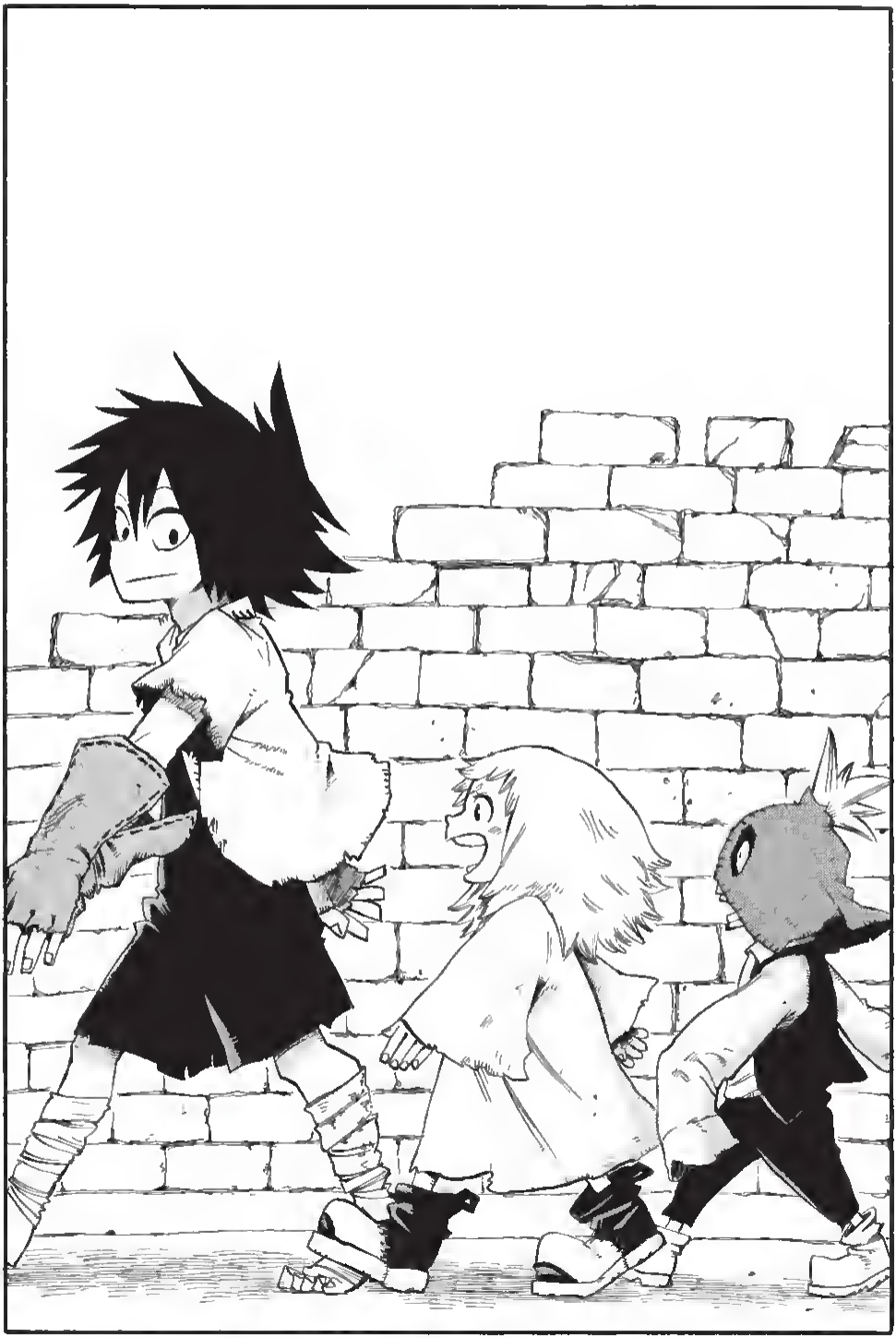
...I WANT TO TELL ... ... YOU ...
...SO MANY THINGS ...

I STILL HAVE ...
AAH, OH GEEZ ...



THUD

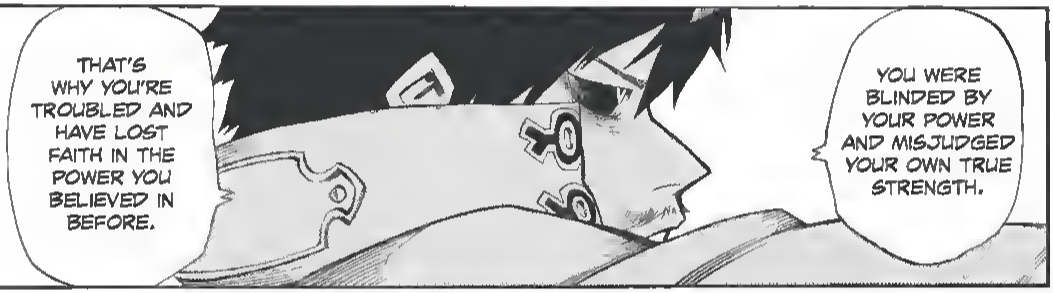
HNFF...
HNFF...
FWOOO
オオオ
I CAN'T BE-LIEVE IT!
I GOT HIT TWICE!
I COULDN'T DODGE ...
SLASH
ズル
SLASH
ズル
DIDN'T YOU?!
YOU TOLD ME THAT DARK ENERGY WAS INVINCI-BLE!!
SHUT UP...!
OOH! TAD, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR LEG THERE?!
BLACK!!
オオ...
9200...

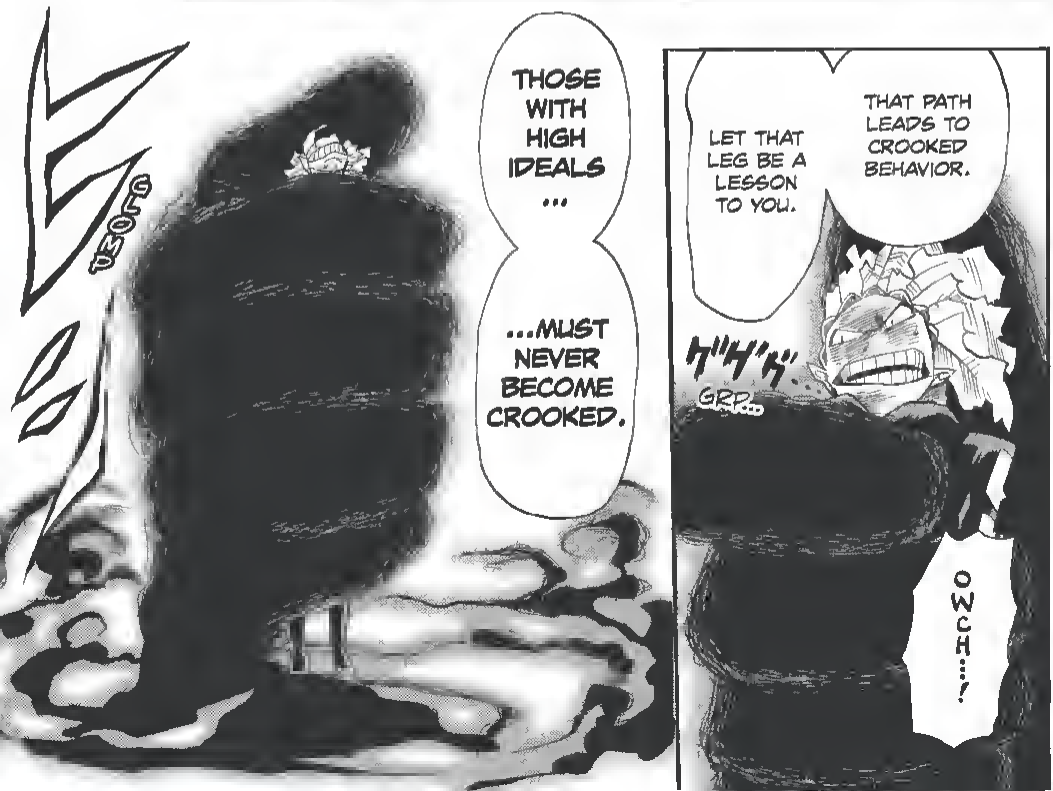


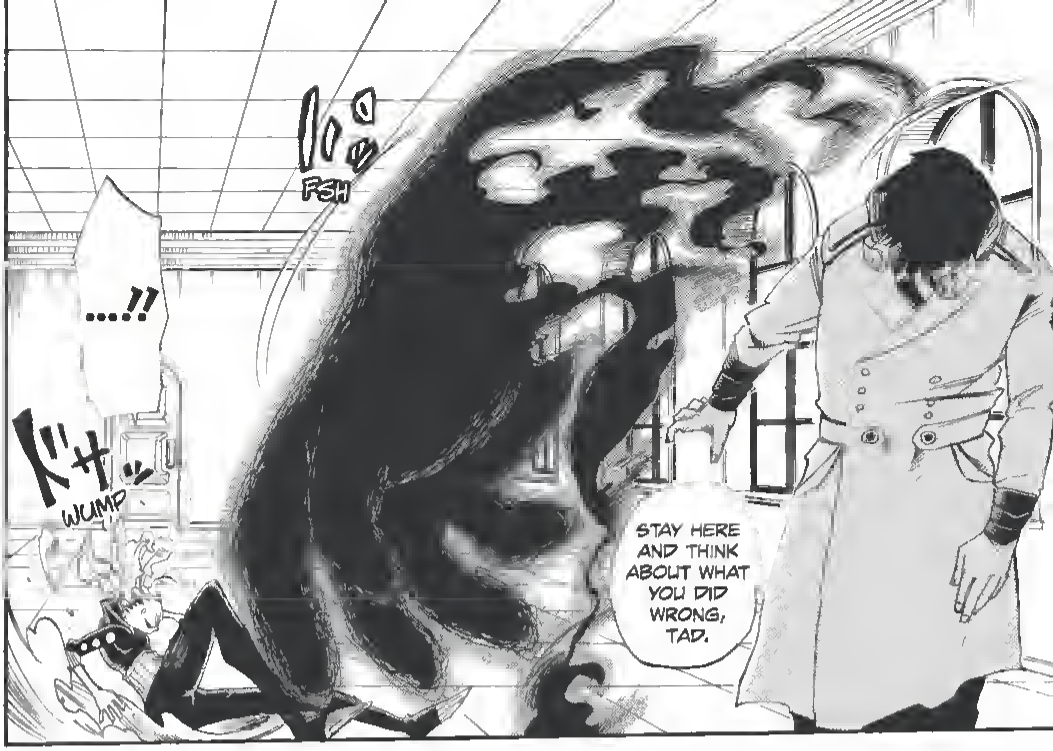
Chapter 12: Fresh Resolve

AND THE ORGUE, THEY'RE BOTH IN THIS TOWN.
THE PRINCE OF INDUSTRIA.
WHO CARES ABOUT THAT?!
BECAUSE HE'S SO GOSH-DARN LOYAL. HEE HEE!
TEEHEE
THAT MEANS TIAMAT'S HERE TOO.
I BET HE'S ANGRY AT ME.
THE ORGUE DEFEATED YOUR PRECIOUS SO-CALLED "INVINCIBLE" POWER EASILY!
SHA...
MY LEG POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CRACK THE GROUND OPEN!
THE PROBLEM IS THAT ORGUE!
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS REIN-FORCED WITH DARK ENERGY, THE ORGUE GOUGED MY LEG!

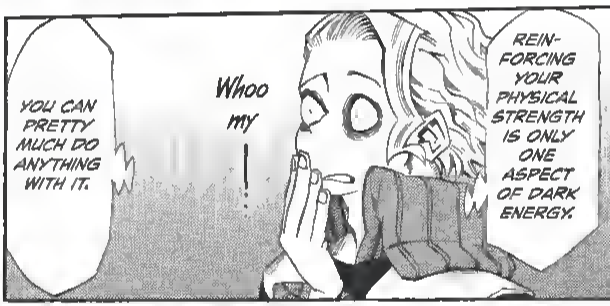
HOW COULD A BOY WITH NO PHYSICAL STRENGTH WIELD A LARGE SWORD?
YOU LACK SKILL.
ZWOO
!!
THE PROBLEM IS YOUR ATTITUDE.
ZSSH...


THAT'S WHY YOU'RE TROUBLED AND HAVE LOST FAITH IN THE POWER YOU BELIEVED IN BEFORE.
YOU WERE BLINDED BY YOUR POWER AND MISJUDGED YOUR OWN TRUE STRENGTH.


DOOO
THOSE WITH HIGH IDEALS ...
...MUST NEVER BECOME CROOKED.
LET THAT LEG BE A LESSON TO YOU.
THAT PATH LEADS TO CROOKED BEHAVIOR.
GRP...
OWCH...!

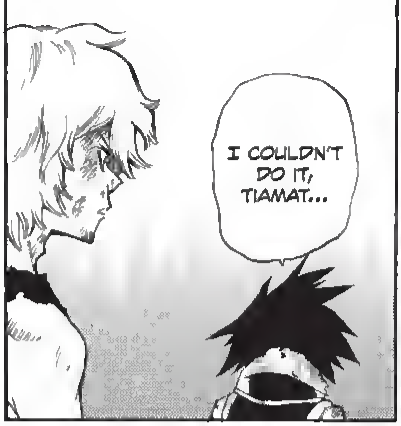

FSH
...!!
WUMP
STAY HERE AND THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU DID WRONG, TAD.

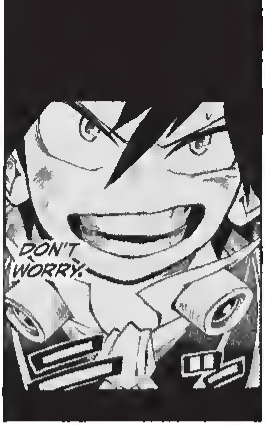
...
THE PRINCE OF INDUSTRIA, HUH?


REIN-FORCING YOUR PHYSICAL STRENGTH IS ONLY ONE ASPECT OF DARK ENERGY.
Whoo my!
YOU CAN PRETTY MUCH DO ANYTHING WITH IT.

ASTRO ...
FWOO

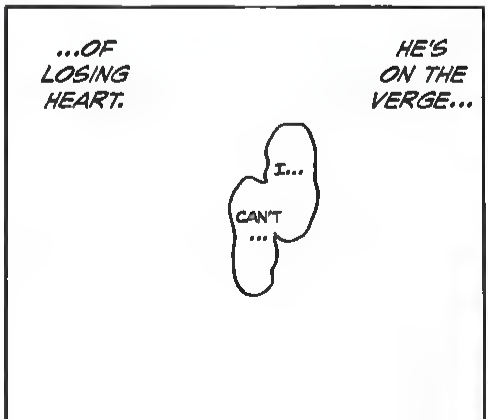
IT'S...
...BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO WEAK.
IT'S MY FAULT ...
...!
I'M SORRY... IT'S ALL MY FAULT...! OLD MAN...!


I COULDN'T DO IT, TIAMAT...


DON'T WORRY.

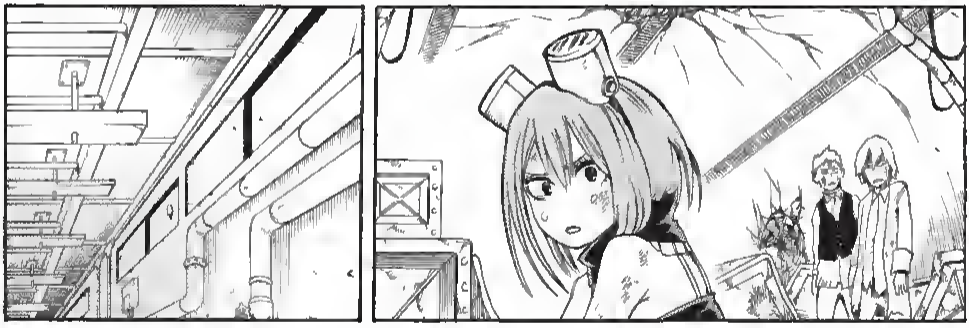
ACT LIKE A PRINCE.
DON'T EVER MAKE THAT FACE IN FRONT OF THE CITIZENS.

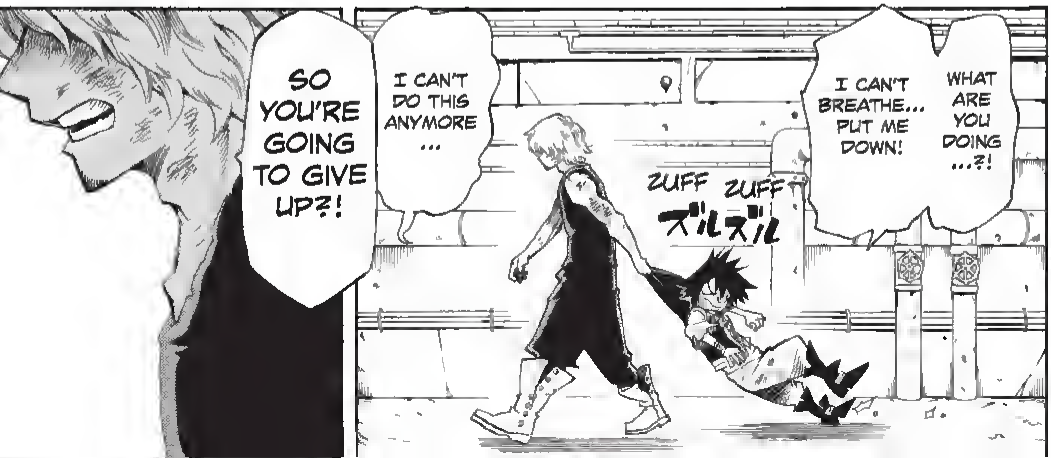
I...
... COULDN'T PROTECT HIM...


...OF LOSING HEART.
HE'S ON THE VERGE...
I... CAN'T ...

THE PRINCE... IS SUP-POSED TO PROTECT PEOPLE...

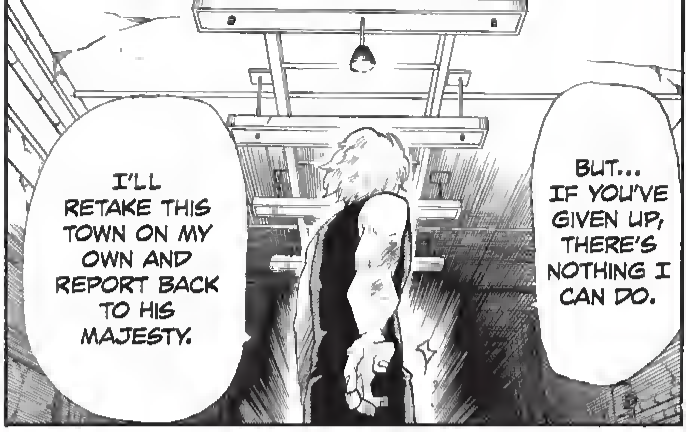
TUG
COME WITH ME!
WHOA!!
HMPH...



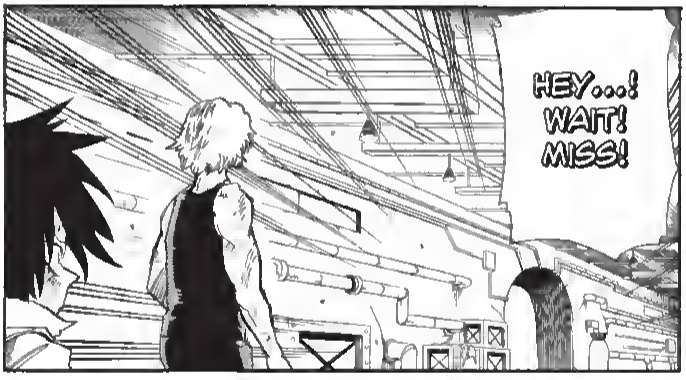

SO YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE UP?!
I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE ...
ZUFF ZUFF
ズルズル
I CAN'T BREATHE... PUT ME DOWN!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ...?!

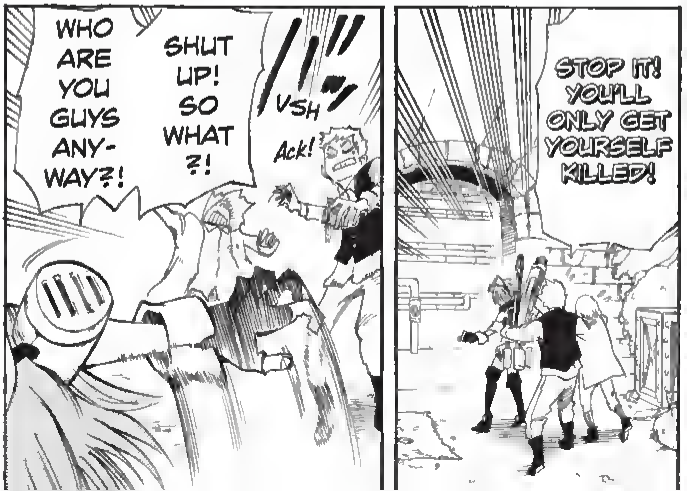
BUT... I COULDN'T PROTECT THE OLD MAN.
I CAN'T BE THE PRINCE!
THIS ISN'T ABOUT BEING THE PRINCE!
TUG
HAVE YOU HONESTLY BEEN FIGHTING BECAUSE YOU'RE A STAND-IN FOR THE PRINCE?! NO!
YOU ACCEPTED THE ROLE OF THE PRINCE...
...BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE IN HELPING FAMILIES, DIDN'T YOU?!

I'M GOING TO SAY THIS NOT AS A SOLDIER OF INDUSTRIA ...
...BUT AS SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN BY YOUR SIDE LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW.
THE ASTRO I KNOW ...
...WOULD THROW HIS LIFE AWAY FOR A FAMILY!
HE WOULD NEVER GIVE UP!!


I'LL RETAKE THIS TOWN ON MY OWN AND REPORT BACK TO HIS MAJESTY.
BUT... IF YOU'VE GIVEN UP, THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.

...


HEY...! WAIT! MISS!


WHO ARE YOU GUYS ANY-WAY?!
SHUT UP! SO WHAT?!
VSH
Ack!
STOP IT! YOU'LL ONLY GET YOURSELF KILLED!

TIKO?!
WHAT AM I SEEING?!
KRSHK
!
WE'RE IN AN ARMS DEALER'S STOCKROOM, BEARDY. THERE'RE WEAPONS ALL OVER.
THAT'S NOT IT!
I'M ASKING WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO WITH IT!
IT'S MY FAULT THE OLD MAN IS DEAD.
I WASN'T ABLE TO REPAY HIS KINDNESS, BUT I CAN STILL AVENGE HIM.
GLARE

I'M NOT GOING BE-CAUSE I WANT TO DIE!
AND EVEN IF I DO GET KILLED ...
...I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO LOSE ANYMORE.
ARE YOU STUPID?! DO YOU WANT TO GET KILLED?!
VSH
AM I SURROUNDED BY LOST CAUSES?!
GET OUT OF MY WAY!
NWAA?!
BOOSH
WAIT!
?!

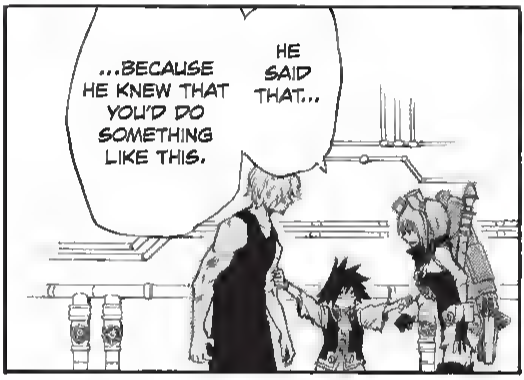
BAAM
JUST WAIT.

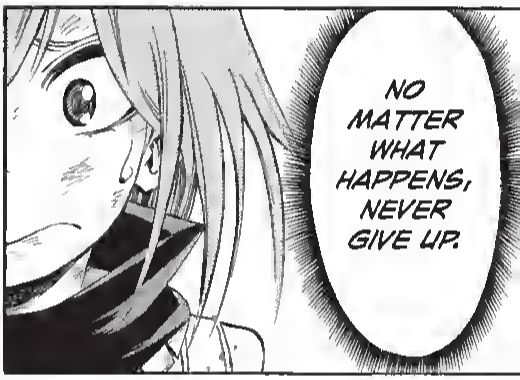
...JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE THE PRINCE!!
WHY NOT?! DON'T THINK YOU CAN ORDER ME AROUND ...

ASTRO...!

YOU CAN'T GO, TIKO.

!
DON'T FORGET THE OLD MAN'S LAST WORDS!


HE SAID THAT...
...BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT YOU'D DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS.


NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, NEVER GIVE UP.

I'LL DO IT.
!

THEN WHAT AM I SUP-POSED TO DO ...?!
JUST STEW IN ANGER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE?!

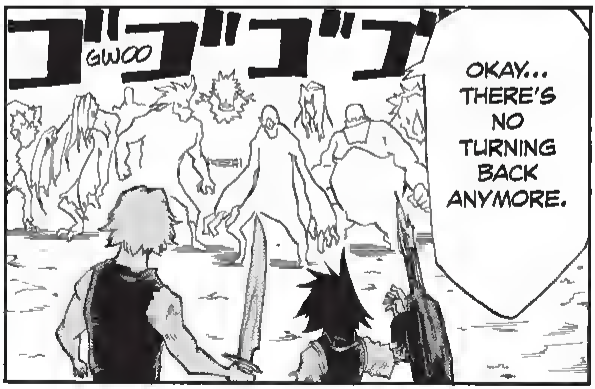
Phew...
BEING THE PRINCE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.
...BUT I THINK THE ORGUE HAS A CHANCE AGAINST IT.
THAT DARK WHATCHA-MACALLIT IS REALLY STRONG...
YOU...
...CAN'T DIE.
SO I'M GOING TO FIGHT FOR YOU!
HA! THIRTY, SCHMIRTY!
IF I HAD BEEN THERE, WITH THESE MUSCLES...
MACHO ムッキリ
...IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BAM!!
THIRTY OF US GOT TAKEN DOWN!
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE HUMANS CAUSING A RUCKUS ON THE MAIN STREET?
MURMUR
MURMUR
SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS.

HWUUH?!
HEY?!
JUST BEING GRAZED KNOCKED THEM DOWN!
THAT THING IS DANGER-OUS!
A SWORD?!!
IT'S LONG!
WHAT THE?!!

IT WON'T GO TO WASTE.
SUSH
SO MUCH FOR ALL THAT SPEAR TRAINING I DID.
WHY DID IT CHANGE SHAPE?

IT GROWS TOO.
NOT TO MENTION ITS UNBE-LIEVABLE RANGE.
SO IT'S STILL A POWERFUL SINGLE STRIKE WEAPON AGAINST WEAK ALIENS.
ZUFF...

THEM?! JUST THE TWO...? YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING!
THEY'RE THE ONES FROM BEFORE!


GWOO
OKAY... THERE'S NO TURNING BACK ANYMORE.

DADOOM
WE'RE GOING TO GET THE TOWN BACK...
AND AVENGE THE OLD MAN'S DEATH!

WHAT IF TIAMAT HAD 200 VERTEBRAE IN HIS NECK?
*I started drawing this after 4 am. But don't worry, I'm fine.

HEY, HEY, HEY! OMIGOD, THEY'RE COMING THIS WAY! THEY'RE COMING, THEY'RE COMING, THEY'RE...
HEY...
MURMUR
WHAT'S WITH THESE GUYS?! THEY'RE UNBELIEVABLY STRONG!

Chapter 13: Meeting the Enemy

オ
オ
GWOO
オ
....!

UN-
BELIEV-
ABLE.
JUST TWO STRIKES AND HE DEFEATED ALMOST HALF OF THE ALIENS...!

HN...
AND I'M SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE ABLE TO WIELD THAT NEW WEAPON SO WELL.

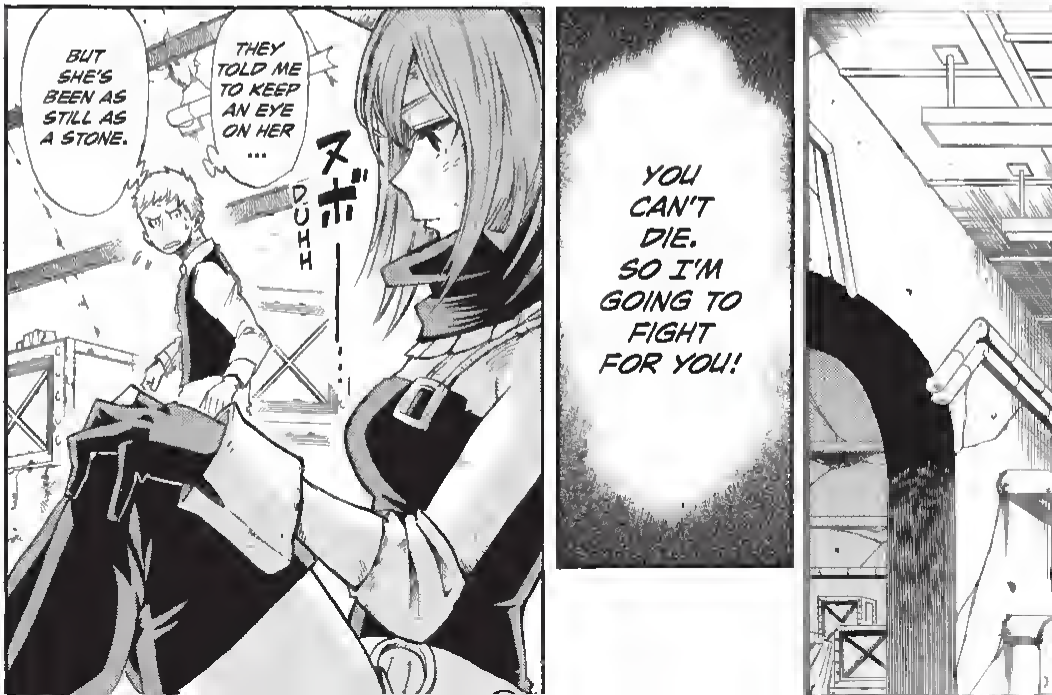
I DON'T KNOW WHY... BUT IT'S COMING NATURALLY TO ME.

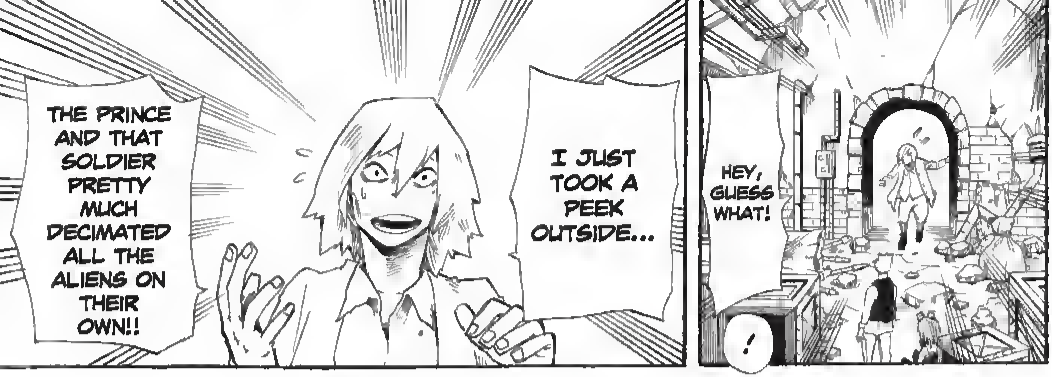
ASHME

YOU'RE DEAD MEEEAT !!
TIAMAT! BEHIND YOU!!
A
BWUH?!
SLISH

IT'S GOING TO TAKE A LITTLE MORE TIME FOR ME TO GET USED TO THIS SWORD...
It's too light...
BADAM!

THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE.
OKAY, LET'S GO.
RIGHT...
ROGER!!!
EEK!
DASH


BUT SHE'S BEEN AS STILL AS A STONE.
THEY TOLD ME TO KEEP AN EYE ON HER ...
DUHH
ヌボ——...
YOU CAN'T DIE. SO I'M GOING TO FIGHT FOR YOU!


THE PRINCE AND THAT SOLDIER PRETTY MUCH DECIMATED ALL THE ALIENS ON THEIR OWN!!
I JUST TOOK A PEEK OUTSIDE...
HEY, GUESS WHAT!
!

WILL I...
HEY, MISS! I'M SURE THEY'LL AVENGE YOUR DAD!
THEY BEAT BACK ALL THE INVADERS!

...TO SMILE AND THANK THEM?
...REALLY BE ABLE...

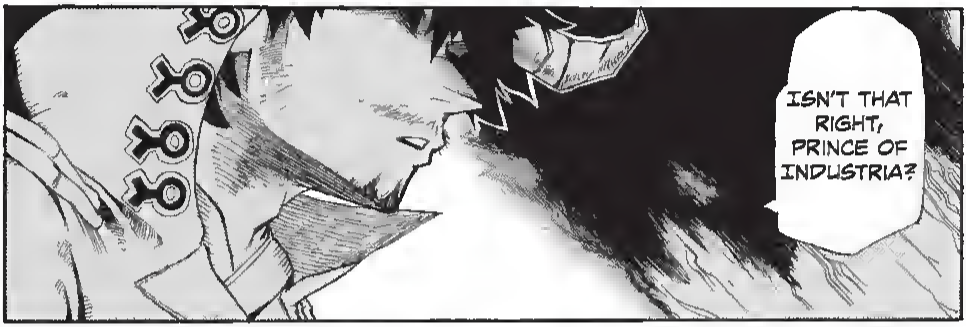
OLD MAN.
AND YOU WANT ME TO JUST SIT HERE AND WAIT FOR THEM...?
HUH?! HN?!
LETTING SOME-ONE ELSE...
TSUCH
...AVENGE MY PARENTS' DEATHS.

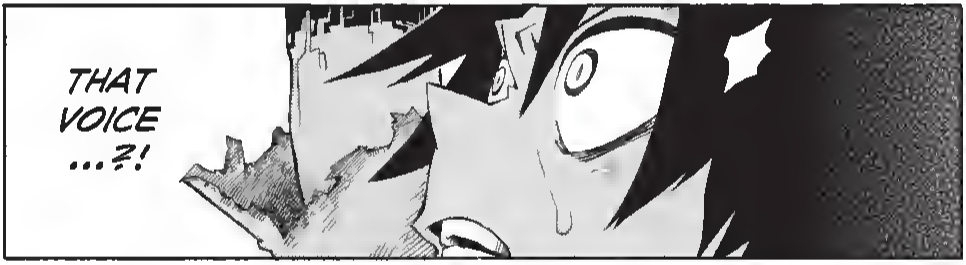
AND THE MILITARY FORCES' TRAITOR TOO.
...ZUFF...
HERE WE ARE. THIS IS WHERE LONG LEGS AND THE INVADERS' BOSS ARE.
FWOO
...
THE BOSS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY USE DARK ENERGY TOO.

I'LL JUST CHOP THE WHOLE PLACE IN HALF!
WOOSH
C'MON
WE'D BE FOOLS TO FACE THAT POWER DIRECTLY.
IN A SERIOUS BATTLE, WE'LL BE THE ONES AT A DISADVANTAGE.
FIRST WE'LL NEED TO GET LONG LEGS, THE BOSS, AND THE TRAITOR TO LOWER THEIR GUARDS ...
BLAH
...AND USE THAT CHANCE TO PIERCE THEM WITH THE ORGUE.
TO DO THAT, YOU AND I WILL NEED TO COOPERATE.
BLAH
NOW'S OUR CHANCE.
WHIZUFF
THIS TIME, WE'LL NEED TO STICK TO THE PLAN-
HUH?

GWOO
I HEAR THAT YOU'RE ON A JOURNEY.
?!!

A HAND ...!
WHAT THE...


ISN'T THAT RIGHT, PRINCE OF INDUSTRIA?


THAT VOICE ...?!

HEY !!
WAIT... HOLD ON! HEY!

SO, YOU'RE THE ONE CONTROL-LING THIS TOWN...
THEY WERE READY FOR US...!!

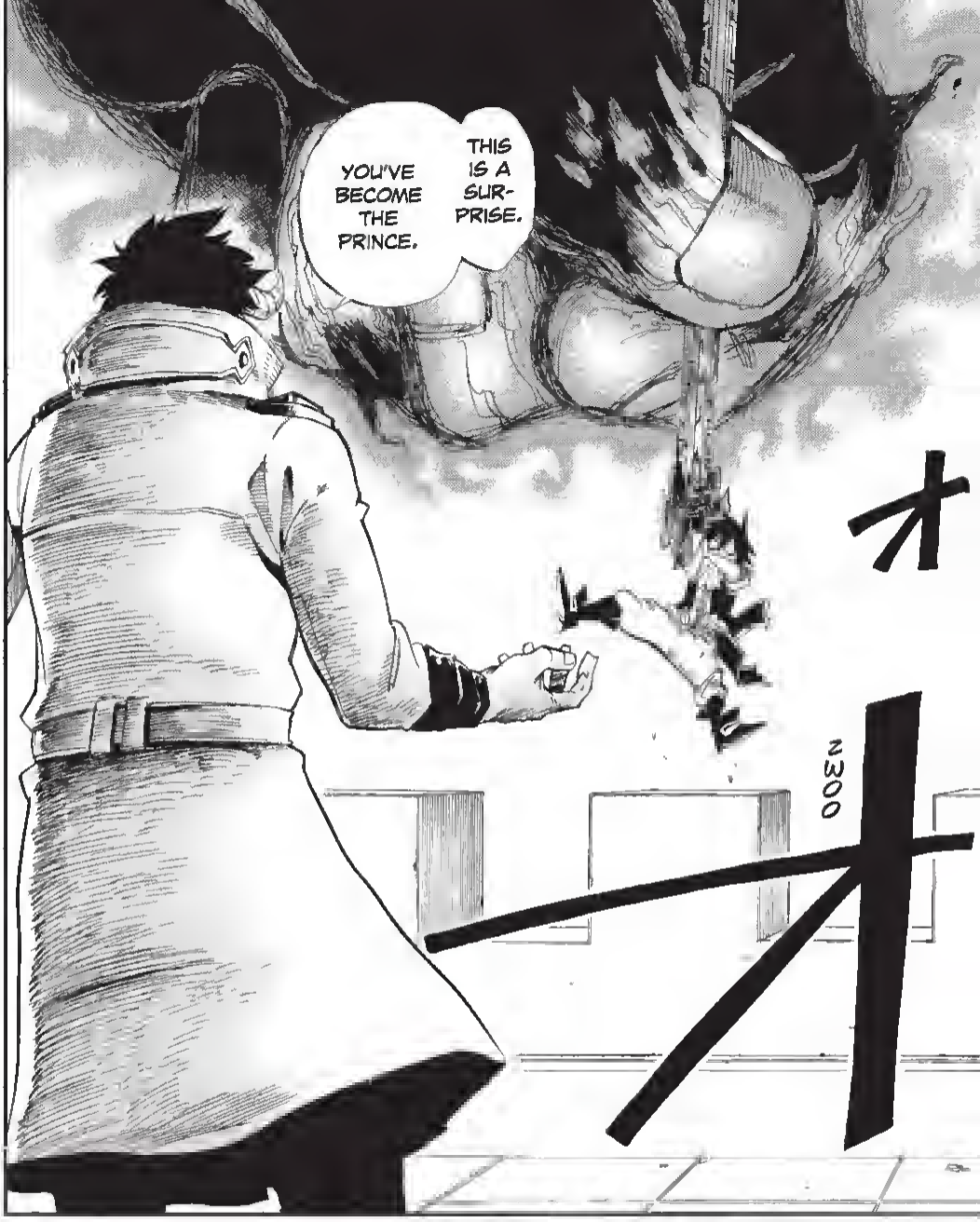
BLACK?!

MY NAME...?! IS THAT YOU...
...ASTRO?!

WHAT ...?
WHY ...?
BUT HE LOOKS TOTALLY EVIL...
?!
BLACK?! THE MAN WHO WAS LIKE A FATHER TO YOU?!
...THE PRINCE?
WHY HAVE YOU BECOME ...
SHA
WHOA ...!
WE DON'T STAND A CHANCE IF THEY SEPARATE US...
COME BACK!!
SHA
ゲオ
WHOA!
WOOオ
WHOA !!

NNH !!
VSH
SHF
AN ATTACK!!
SO HOW ABOUT IT, TIAMAT?
!!
BLACK WANTS TO HAVE A LITTLE TALK WITH THE PRINCE...
WHA...
...
SWIP...
ASTRO!!
WOOOSH
WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO CHIT-CHAT WITH THE TRAITOR?

GWOO...
ズラ...
... YOU'VE DONE A VERY POOR JOB!
IF THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A BLOCKADE...
CALM DOWN. GETTING TO ASTRO IS MY TOP PRIORITY!!
I HAVE NO TIME FOR THAT...
WHY DO I HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO STOP THE SIDEKICK?!
I WANT TO KILL THE BRAT...!
GSH
?!!
YOU NEVER LEARN YOUR LESSON, TAD. I LOVE THAT ABOUT YOU.
THING IS... WE CAN'T STOP THIS GUY ON OUR OWN. WE NEED YOUR HELP.
NO!!
DAMN IT!!


THIS IS A SUR-PRISE.
YOU'VE BECOME THE PRINCE.
ゴゴゴ

YOUR HORNS ...!
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EYES?

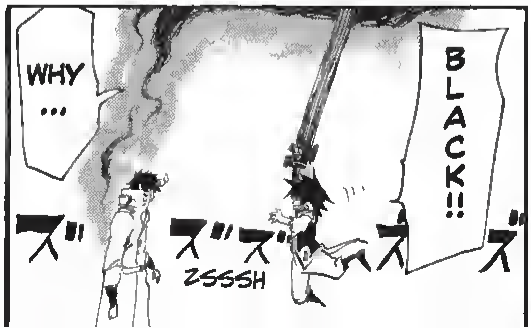
WHY ...?
IS THAT REALLY YOU, BLACK ...?!

THIS IS... REALLY SUCH A SURPRISE.
THEN WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?
YOU CHOSE TO RETURN?

...AND KILLED LOTS OF PEOPLE TOO. WHY, BLACK ...?!
... GATH-ERED ALIENS ...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I DON'T GET IT! YOU TOOK OVER THIS TOWN...

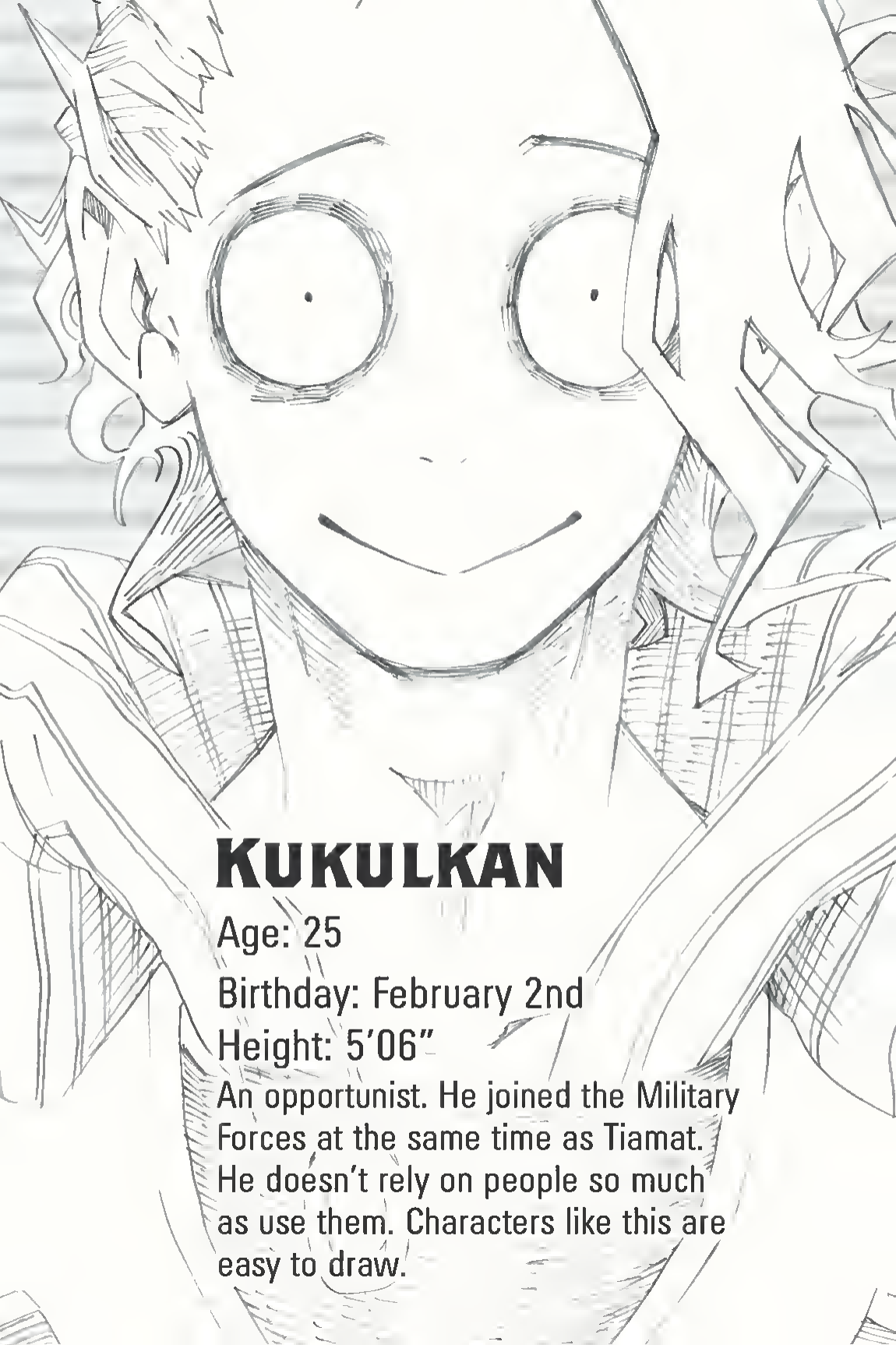
...YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, HUH?
IT SEEMS...

YOU STOPPED ME WHEN I TRIED TO STEAL!
YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO PROTECT THE KIDS ...!
YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO LIVE ...!
WHY ...?!


WHY ...
BLACK!!
ZSSSH

THAT WAS BE-CAUSE ...

I WAS WRONG BACK THEN. I WAS TOO SOFT.
BUT THAT WAS THEN, AND THIS IS NOW.
NOW I WILL CONQUER THIS WARRING PLANET WITH DARKNESS.
WHY ...
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE REAL BARRAGE. THE TRUE PRINCE OF INDUSTRIA.



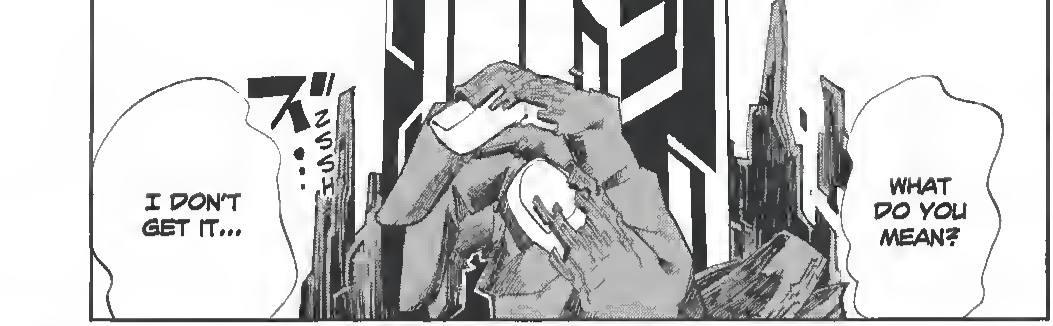
KUKULKAN

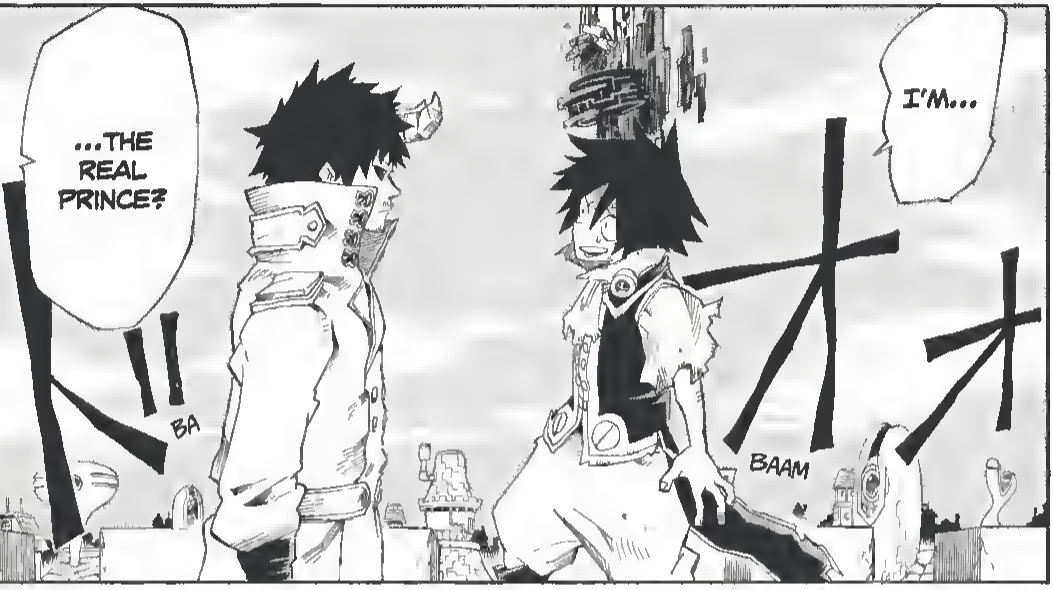
Age: 25

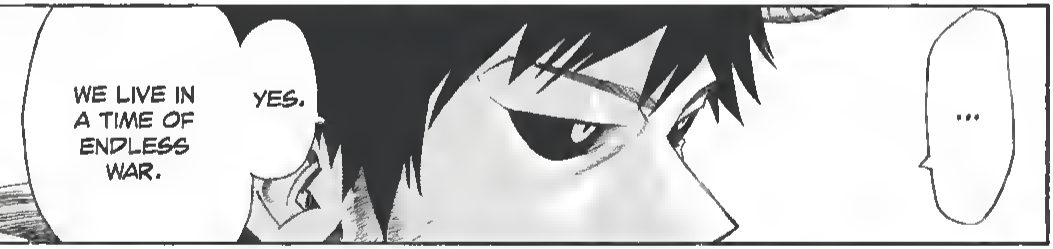
Birthday: February 2nd

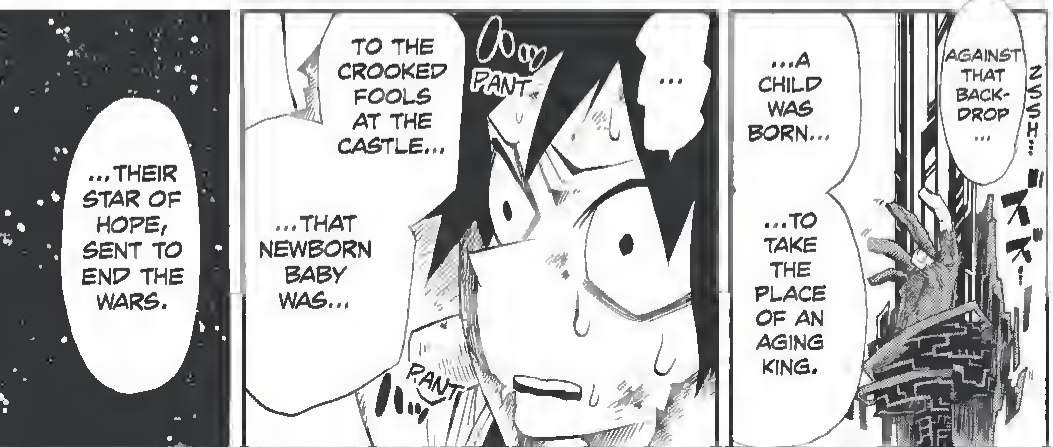
Height: 5'06"

An opportunist. He joined the Military Forces at the same time as Tiamat. He doesn't rely on people so much as use them. Characters like this are easy to draw.


I DON'T GET IT...
ZSSH...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


...THE REAL PRINCE?
BA
I'M...
BAAM

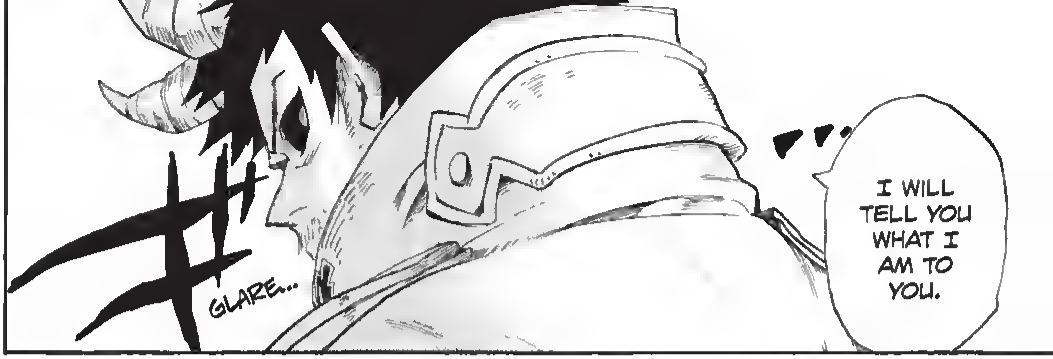

WE LIVE IN A TIME OF ENDLESS WAR.
YES.
...

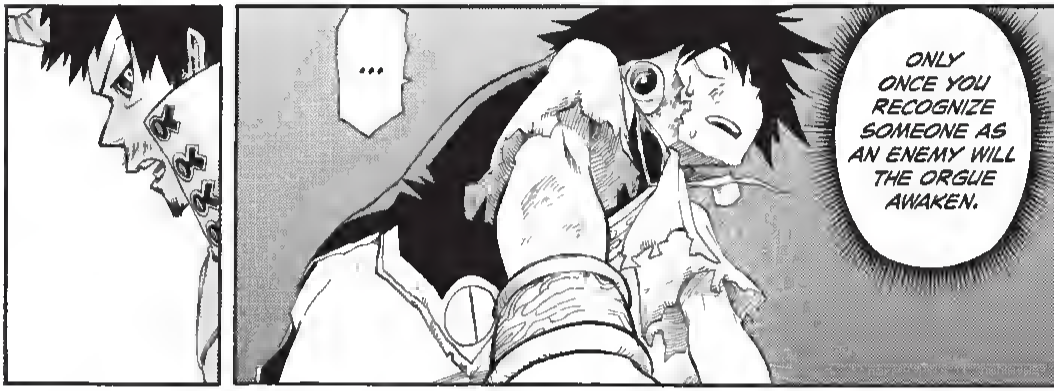

...THEIR STAR OF HOPE, SENT TO END THE WARS.
TO THE CROOKED FOOLS AT THE CASTLE...
...THAT NEWBORN BABY WAS...
PANT
PANT
...
...A CHILD WAS BORN...
...TO TAKE THE PLACE OF AN AGING KING.
AGAINST THAT BACK-DROP ...
ZSSH...

BARRAGE OF THE WARRING PLANETS.
Chapter 14: Crooked Sorrows

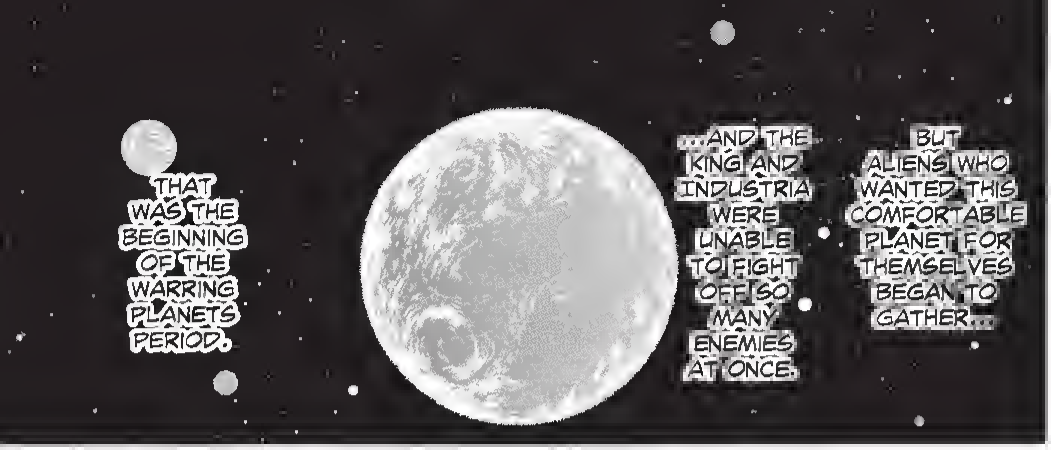
A TROUBLED MIND LEADS TO A CROOKED FAITH.
YOU ARE TROUBLED ...
THEN WHAT..? I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE THE KING IS MY FATHER?
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER PRINCE?
VERY FUNNY...
ズSH!!
OW...
ドWUMP

I DON'T GET IT...!
YOU STILL HAVE THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE LIKE YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ...
I DON'T GET WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO.
BLACK, YOU...
ONCE YOU CHOOSE TO FALL, YOU'LL NEVER STOP TUMBLING DOWN A BOTTOMLESS PIT!
YOU MUST NEVER BECOME CROOKED.
CHOO
WHAT ARE YOU ...?!
VERY WELL.
NOW THAT YOU'VE TAKEN YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE, YOU SHOULD KNOW THE TRUTH...
...AND THEN DECIDE FOR YOURSELF.
...



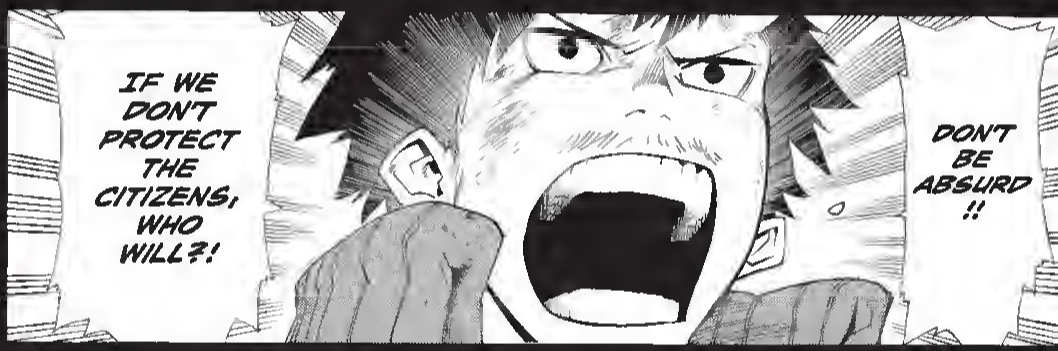


I USED TO WORK UNDER THE KING.


THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE WARRING PLANETS PERIOD.
...AND THE KING AND INDUSTRIA WERE UNABLE TO FIGHT OFF SO MANY ENEMIES AT ONCE.
BUT ALIENS WHO WANTED THIS COMFORTABLE PLANET FOR THEMSELVES BEGAN TO GATHER...

17 YEARS AGO – 2 YEARS BEFORE ASTRO WAS BORN
ANOTHER NATION FELL TODAY.
IT'S BEEN NOTHING BUT WAR THESE DAYS...
BLACK (30 YEARS OLD AT THE TIME)

MAYBE IT WOULD BE BETTER IF WE JUST WAVED THE WHITE FLAG.
WE'RE ALWAYS UP AGAINST BIZARRE NEW TACTICS AND WEAPONS.
HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO STRATEGIZE?
WE MIGHT HAVE STOOD A CHANCE IF JUST ONE ALIEN RACE WAS ATTACKING US, BUT THERE ARE SO MANY AT ONCE.
MURMUR
MURMUR
THINGS GET WORSE EVERY MINUTE... HOW MANY OF US MADE IT OUT ALIVE TODAY?
ABOUT A THIRD OF THE UNIT.



EVERYONE WAS CROOKED.

THE WORLD WAS FULL OF NOTHING BUT MURDERERS AND THE MURDERED, AND INDUSTRIA HAD GIVEN UP.

THINGS HAD BECOME UNTENABLE.

2 YEARS LATER - BARRAGE (ASTRO) IS BORN

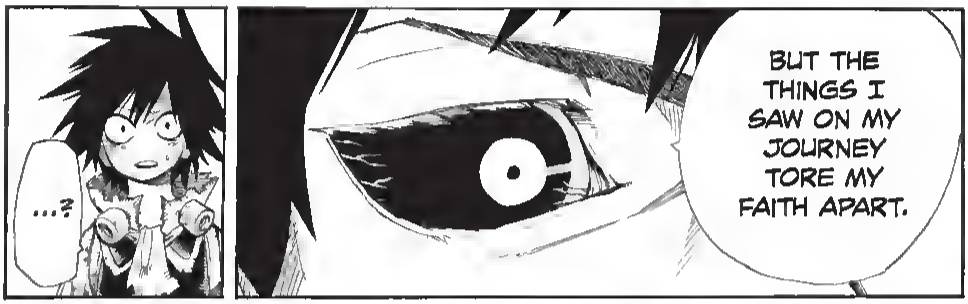
おんぎゃー
WAANH
おんぎゃー
WAANH
あーびゃー
WAAAH
WONDERFUL...
WHAT A JOYOUS OCCASION, YOUR MAJESTY!
A MIGHTY FEAT AT YOUR AGE!
AND A BOY TOO...!
CAPTAIN BLACK, COME PAY YOUR RESPECTS TOO.
OH...
BOW...
ペコ...
HA HA.
OH...? BARRAGE STOPPED CRYING.
Sniff
WAAH
BLACK, PERHAPS YOU HAVE A TALENT FOR PACIFYING BABIES?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HOLD HIM?
OH NO! BUT... YOUR MAJESTY!
...EVEN IN A WORLD LIKE THIS.
I GUESS THERE ARE STILL GOOD THINGS...
...
スヤー
ZZZ

...
...BUT SOON THE SYMBOL OF OUR STRENGTH WILL REAWAKEN.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE HIS MAJESTY HAS BEEN ABLE TO WIELD THE ORGUE...
Ooh... He's heavy...
HA HA... WHAT A PEACEFUL SMILE.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY ARS.
THEY PLANNED TO DRAG AN INNOCENT BABY INTO THE SINS OF WAR.
...
THIS LITTLE BOY IS THE STAR OF HOPE THAT WILL END THIS ENDLESS CONFLICT.
PRINCE BARRAGE OF THE WARRING PLANETS!
...YOU MUST HAVE SEEN IT TOO.
SINCE YOU'VE BEEN TRAVELING ...
...PEOPLE GRADUALLY BECAME MORE CROOKED.
BECAUSE THE WORLD WAS CROOKED...

FORGET ABOUT GETTING REVENGE.
IF WE DON'T DO IT, HE'LL KILL US!
...THEN WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER PRINCE?
IF I'M REALLY THE PRINCE ...
DON'T TELL ME WE'RE TWINS OR SOMETHING...
TELL ME IN A WAY I CAN UNDER-STAND!!
SO THEN WHAT?!
...OF A CHILD BEING FORCED DOWN A CROOKED PATH.
BACK THEN, I COULDN'T TOLERATE THE THOUGHT...
ゴゴ GWOO
IT'S THE ENERGY THAT FORMS THE UNI-VERSE.
IT IS THE BUILDING BLOCK OF ALL THINGS.
OBJECTS... POWER... EVEN LIFE-FORMS...
DARK ENERGY.
?
GWO
OOO

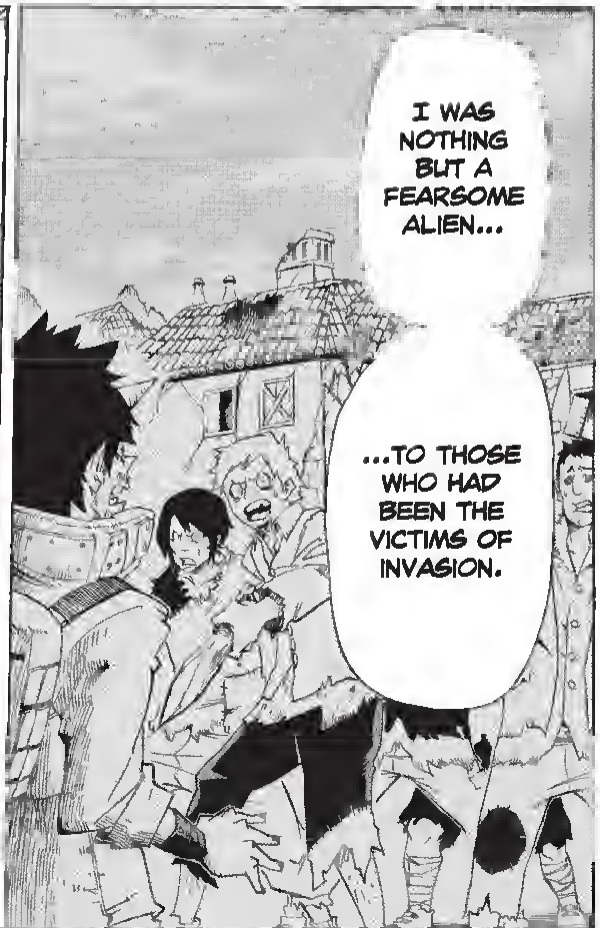
...AND FREED THE REAL PRINCE.
USING DARK ENERGY I CREATED A DUMMY...
WHAT?
...WAS HE... CREATED BY BLACK?!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ...?
I'M NOT INTERESTED!
...SO CRAZY.
THAT'S ...
ゴオ...
HSSH...
THE ROYAL FAMILY ACCEPTED MY RACE ...
...BECAUSE THOUGH WE ARE FEW, WE HAVE GREAT COMMAND OVER DARK ENERGY.

NEXT I ENTRUSTED YOU TO THE SLUM DENIZENS, WHO WERE DETACHED FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD...
...AND SET OUT ON A JOURNEY...
...TO SAVE PEOPLE IN MY OWN WAY.


BUT THE THINGS I SAW ON MY JOURNEY TORE MY FAITH APART.
...?

NO!! I JUST WANT TO HELP YOU...!
SHUT UP, YOU DEMON! GET OUT OF OUR VILLAGE! WE'RE NOT FALLING FOR THAT AGAIN!

IT TURNED OUT THAT THE PEOPLE I HAD PROTECTED UNDER THE KING...
...HAD TURNED CROOKED AS WELL.

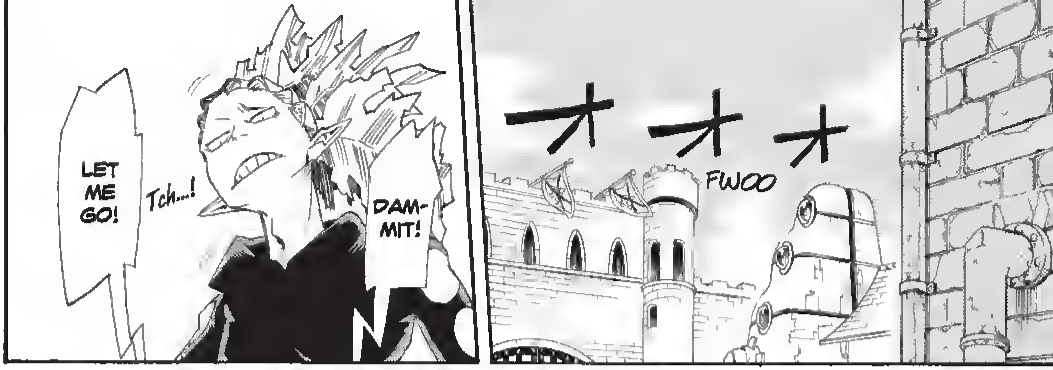

I WAS NOTHING BUT A FEARSOME ALIEN...
...TO THOSE WHO HAD BEEN THE VICTIMS OF INVASION.

I JOURNEYED FOR TEN YEARS.
AND I NEVER CAME ACROSS A SINGLE PURE-HEARTED PERSON.
BLACK...
WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT IT WAS. EVERYTHING I HAD BELIEVED IN HAD BECOME CROOKED.
GWOO
THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO.
WITH MY POWER AND THE ALIENS I HAVE GATHERED IN THIS TOWN...
I'LL DESTROY EVERYTHING!!

SILENCE!!
HE... WAS LIKE A FATHER TO ME.
...

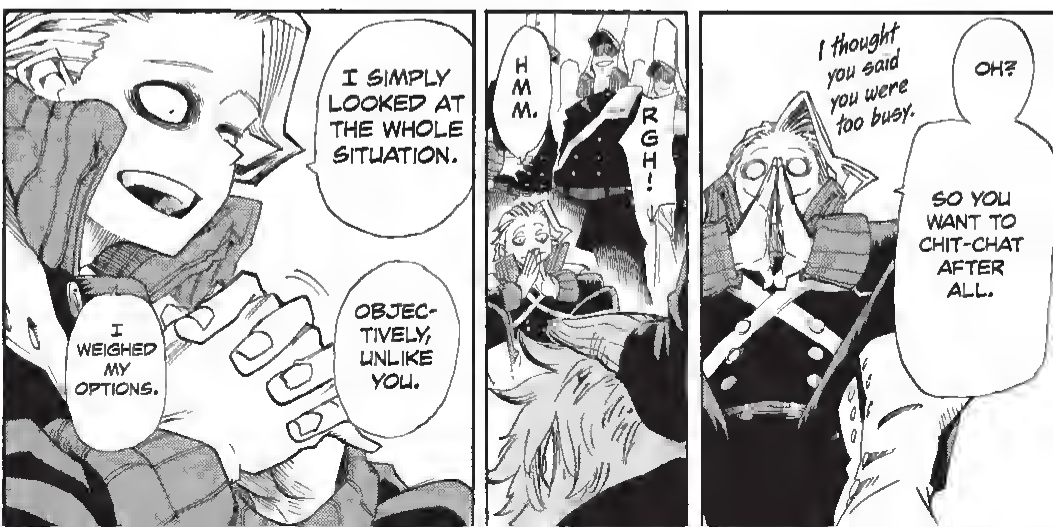
...THAT WOULD MAKE ME YOUR ENEMY.
... THEN ...
ZUFF...
IF YOU ARE PURE-HEARTED ...
ズッ! SHIFF

ASTRO... NO, BARRAGE!
SO? WHAT WILL YOU DO?


LET ME GO!
Tch...!
DAM-MIT!
オオオ
FWOO

THESE ARE BLACK'S ORDERS! HE CAN BE SCARY WHEN HE'S ANGRY!
NO CAN DO, TIAMAT!

HOW DARE YOU SIDE WITH THE ENEMY AND PERPETRATE THEIR CRIMES!
KUKUL-KAN! WHY, YOU...!


I SIMPLY LOOKED AT THE WHOLE SITUATION.
I WEIGHED MY OPTIONS.
OBJEC-TIVELY, UNLIKE YOU.
HMM.
RGH!
I thought you said you were too busy.
OH?
SO YOU WANT TO CHIT-CHAT AFTER ALL.

EVEN THOUGH THESE ALIENS ...
...WILL RESORT TO MASSACRE TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOAL...?
ON ONE SIDE WE HAVE AN IMPOTENT ROYAL FAMILY ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE.
AND ON THE OTHER SIDE WE HAVE A FURIOUS SINGLE-MINDED ALIEN ARMY.
I CHOSE THE ONE WITH THE BETTER CHANCE OF MY SURVIVAL.
WEREN'T YOU LISTENING, TIAMAT?
HA HA. WHAT'S THE MEANING OF PROTECTING ...
...A STUPID GIRL LIKE THAT, HUH?
YOU KNOW SOMETHING? YOU'RE ALLOWED TO KILL PEOPLE YOU DON'T LIKE.
GSH
SO, KUKUL-KAN.
WE GOT ANY REASON TO KEEP THIS GUY ALIVE?
VSH
NADA.
OKAY!
WHAM
!!

PARDON ME.
BWAM
!!

DIDN'T YOU HEAR A WORD OF WHAT THE PRINCE OR THE OLD MAN SAID?!
YOU ...
THEN ...!
THE SPACE WHALE ...?!
I'M NOT HERE TO GET MYSELF KILLED.
HA. I KNEW YOU WERE STUPID. YOU CAME TO GET YOURSELF KILLED.
...!
ZUFF
TA-DA
I'M HERE SO THAT I CAN LIVE WITH A SMILE ON MY FACE!

BLACK

Age: 36

Birthday: July 10th

Height: 6'

A Horn Alien. I wasn't able to fit this into the story, so although it might seem out of place, I'd like to explain some things about him here. His black eyes are a side effect of using more Dark Energy than his body can handle. Kind of like an overdose. And his horns are twisted because he holds a twisted ideology. There's a saying among Horn Aliens that goes, "The horns say more than the mouth." That's Horn Aliens for you.

THE SPACE WHALE...
HOW'D YOU GET INTO TOWN?!
SHUP...
ヌゥゥゥ...
THANKS TO MR. BEARDY AND THE YOUNG MAN, THE TOWN GATES WERE PRETTY MUCH UNGUARDED...
...SO I LET MYSELF IN.
GWOOO
WOO
Chapter 15: All-Around Showdown
BEARDY! I'M GOING TO FIGHT TOO!
MY WAY!

I'M GONNA EXE-CUTE YOU!
SWA
YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA FIGHT?!
...!
MIRA!
KRCHK
WHOA!
URRSH
EAT THIS!
!
VSH

BLAM!
VSH!!

YOU SAW HOW POWERFUL DARK ENERGY IS, REMEMBER?!
TIKO, STOP IT! GUNS DON'T WORK AGAINST HIM!
DAMN IT...!
ZSSSH
...

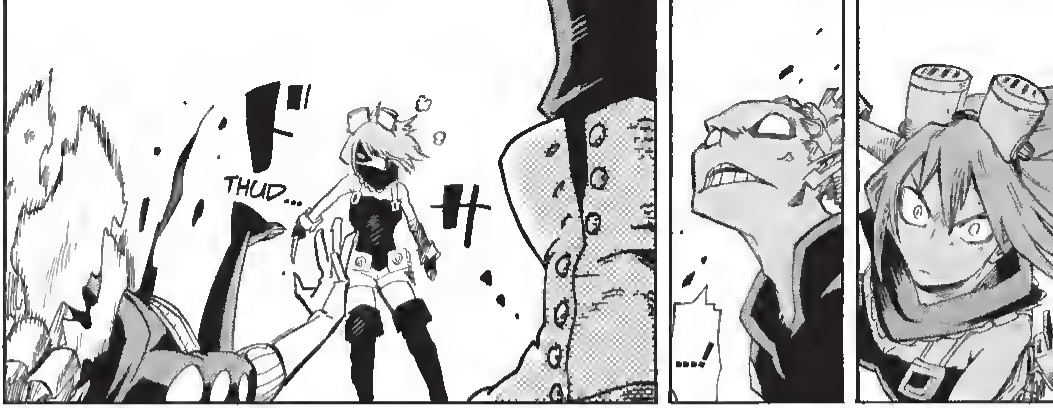
HE ALWAYS USES HIS LEGS TO ATTACK AND DEFEND.
I KNOW FOR SURE NOW.
!
NO. GUNS DO HAVE AN EFFECT.

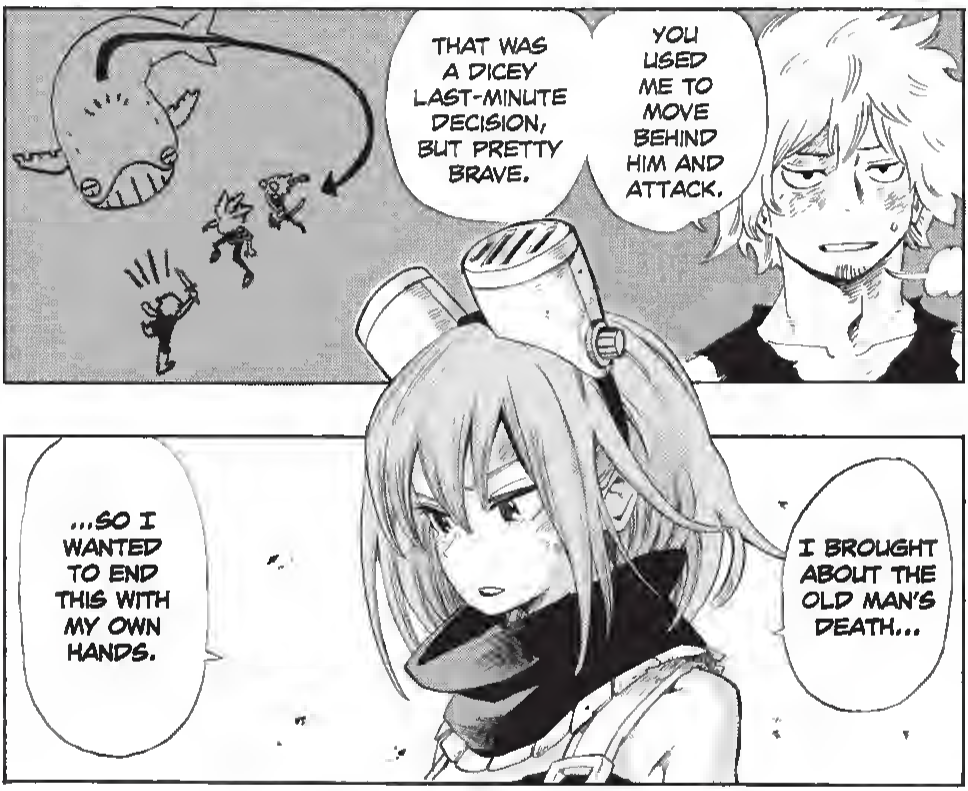
!
HE CAN ONLY USE THAT SMOKY STUFF WITH HIS LEGS!
...
EVEN KNOWING THAT, DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN BEAT ME?
...BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID...
...THAT A BULLET MIGHT HIT HIM.
HE DODGED...
IF HE COULD MAKE HIS WHOLE BODY INVULNERABLE...
...THEN HE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO BOTHER DODGING MY ATTACK!
KRCHK
THAT'S HOW I'LL FIGHT!!
THAT'S MY ANSWER...
SHFF...
...HELP THE PERSON FIGHTING FOR ME!
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO...
I DON'T THINK I CAN! THAT'S WHY...

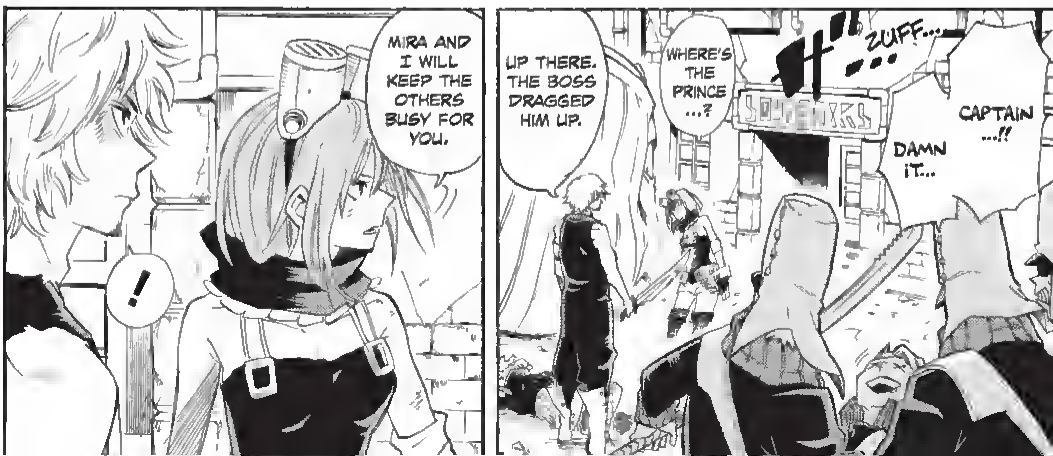
STOP THAT GIRL!
DON'T LET HER SHOOT THE BAZOO-KA!!
IT'S TOO CHEESY! KILL HER, KILL HER!
THIS "HELPING OTHERS FIGHT" IS TOO HEARTWARMING FOR ME.
SILENCE.
SHA
YOU'VE EARNED SEVERE PUNISH-MENT.
SLISH

A SELFISH MAN LIKE YOU HAS NO RIGHT TO JUDGE HER.
クラヌ…!
CLANUE...
...
OH... NO...!
A BAZOOKA FROM THE RIGHT.
A SWORD FROM THE LEFT...
...! AND THAT GOES FOR YOU TOO!
AARGH, YOU'RE SUCH A PAIN IN THE NECK!!
I'LL START WITH THE GIRL!!
TIKO!
THUSH

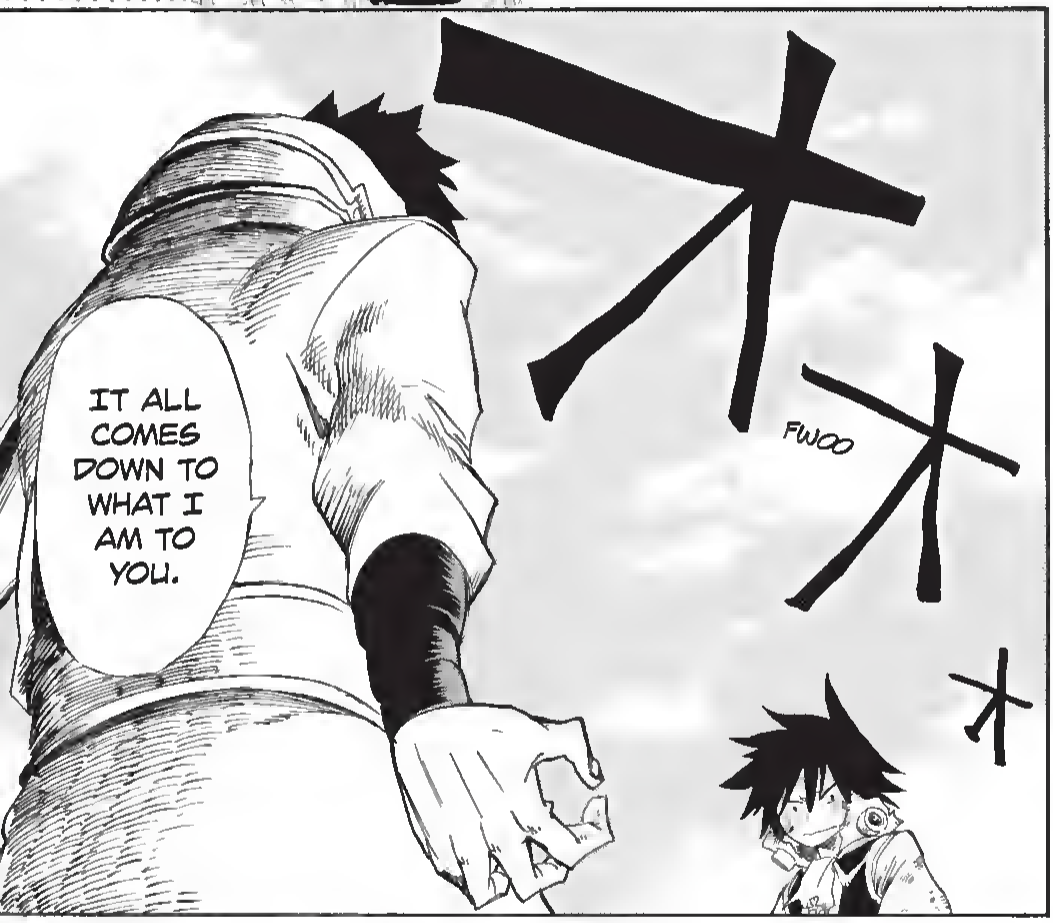
VSH
YOU USED HER TO DISTRACT ME! THAT'S A CHEAP TRICK!
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO HELP THE PERSON FIGHTING FOR ME!
SHE'S GONE!
?!
SLISH

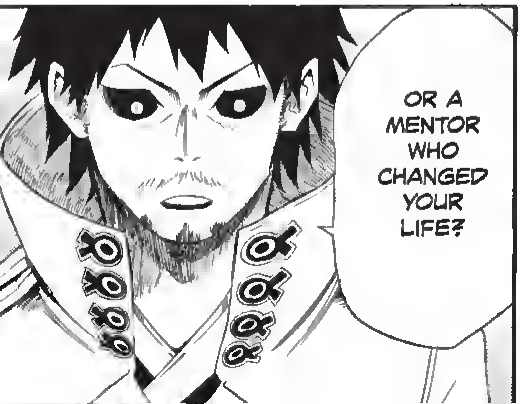

THUD...
...!


YOU USED ME TO MOVE BEHIND HIM AND ATTACK.
THAT WAS A DICEY LAST-MINUTE DECISION, BUT PRETTY BRAVE.
I BROUGHT ABOUT THE OLD MAN'S DEATH...
...SO I WANTED TO END THIS WITH MY OWN HANDS.


MIRA AND I WILL KEEP THE OTHERS BUSY FOR YOU.
!
UP THERE. THE BOSS DRAGGED HIM UP.
WHERE'S THE PRINCE ...?
ZUFF...
CAPTAIN ...!!
DAMN IT...

THANKS.
GRP
...


IT ALL COMES DOWN TO WHAT I AM TO YOU.
FWOO


OR A MENTOR WHO CHANGED YOUR LIFE?

AM I AN ENEMY BENT ON WORLD DOMINATION?

IF YOU FELT SO HOPE-LESS...
...WHY WERE YOU KIND TO ME?
YOU KNOW, IT WAS ON A WHIM.
I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD SEE YOU AGAIN... LET ALONE AS PRINCE.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FAKE BARRAGE?

SOME-BODY KILLED HIM...!
I SEE ...
NO MATTER HOW MANY YEARS PASS BY... CROOKED-NESS BEGETS CROOKED-NESS... SUCH FOOLS...

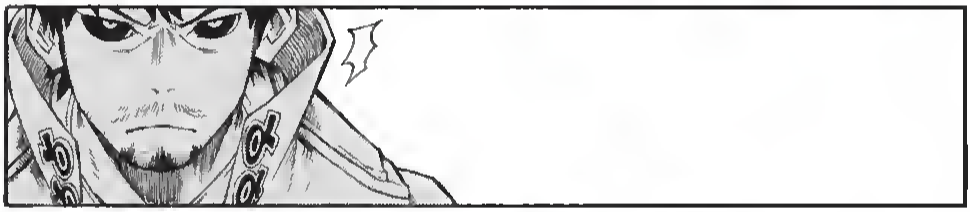
SPEAKING OF FOOLS, THE KING.
THE FAKE BARRAGE WAS ALMOST PERFECTLY REAL, BUT EVEN SO...
...THE KING LOVED HIM ALL THOSE FIFTEEN YEARS, NEVER REALIZING HE WASN'T HIS OWN.

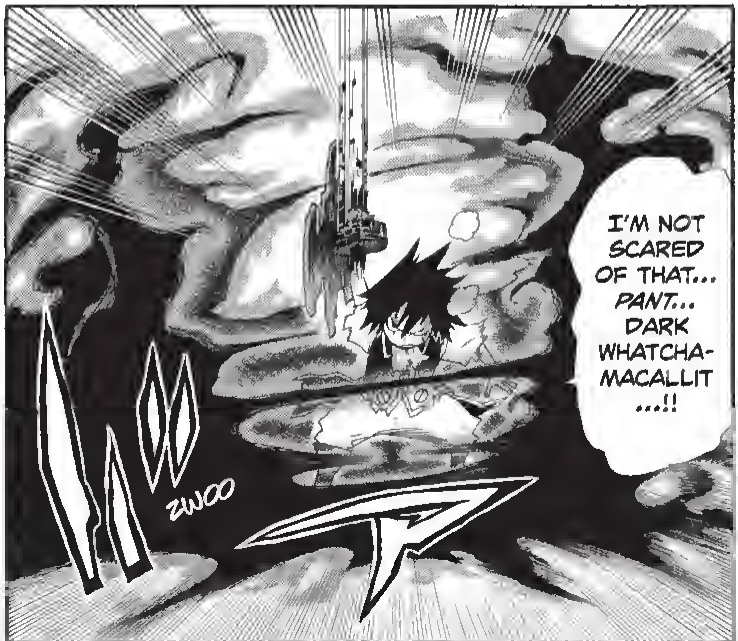
GRP...!!
HE WAS SELFISH TO THE VERY END...
PLIP
ポロ
PLIP
ポロ
...
I CAN'T ALLOW ANYONE TO DESTROY FAMILIES.
THE KING AND THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN HAVE FAMILIES TOO.
FAMILY... MEANS EVERYTHING TO ME. BE IT MY FAMILY OR OTHER PEOPLE'S FAMILIES...
ESPECIALLY NOT A MEMBER OF MY OWN FAMILY.
ズッ...
ZSSH...

THEN COME AND DEFEAT ME.
ZSSSH
BLACK ...!

VSH
BLACK ...!
GWOO
ZUFF
!!
...!

BUAAM

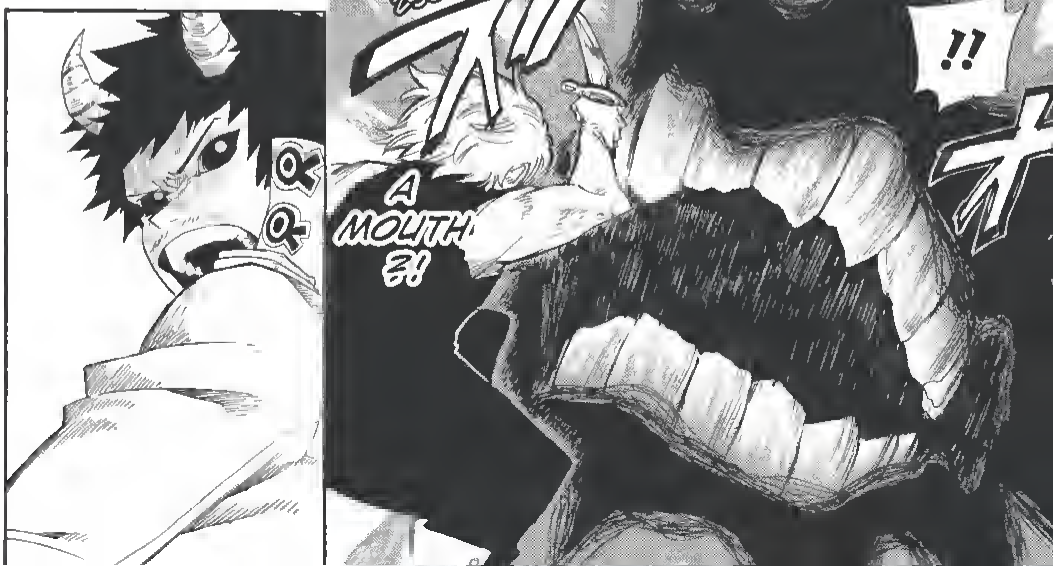



I'M NOT SCARED OF THAT... PANT... DARK WHATCHA-MACALLIT ...!!
ZWOO

ZSH!

クイ...
SWIP..
!!
GSH
ZRRK
WHOA!!!
I CAN SEE THAT YOU STILL HAVE DOUBTS, PRINCE BARRAGE.

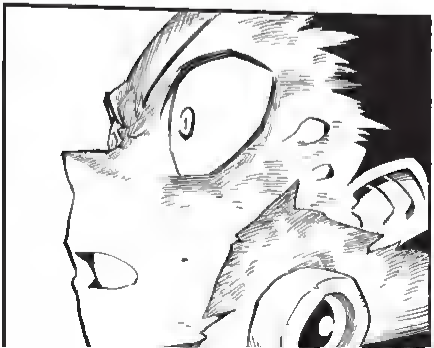
SORRY, ASTRO. I'M CUTTING HIM DOWN!


ZSSH
!!
A MOUTH?!
Q-
Q-

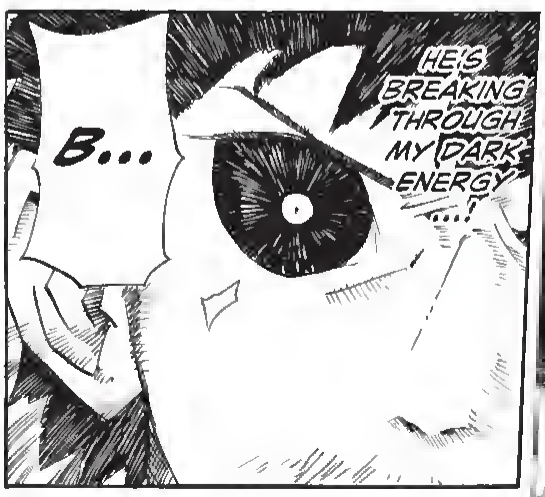
...IS CROOKED.

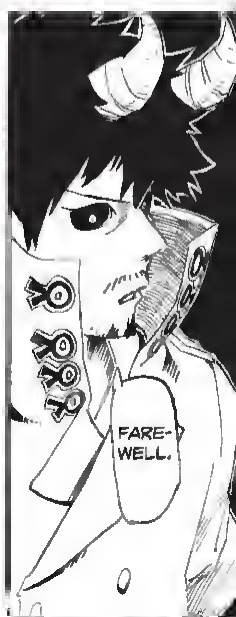
GRRCH...

HAVING SOMETHING TO PROTECT AT ALL COSTS...



AAARGH!!
THIS IS THE END OF INDUSTRIA.


B...
HE'S BREAKING THROUGH MY DARK ENERGY...!


FARE-WELL.

BWUSH
BLAAACK!!!

STAFF

IPPEI WATANABE
He loves wasabi. Sick.
He has a fetish for that one muscle in people's necks.

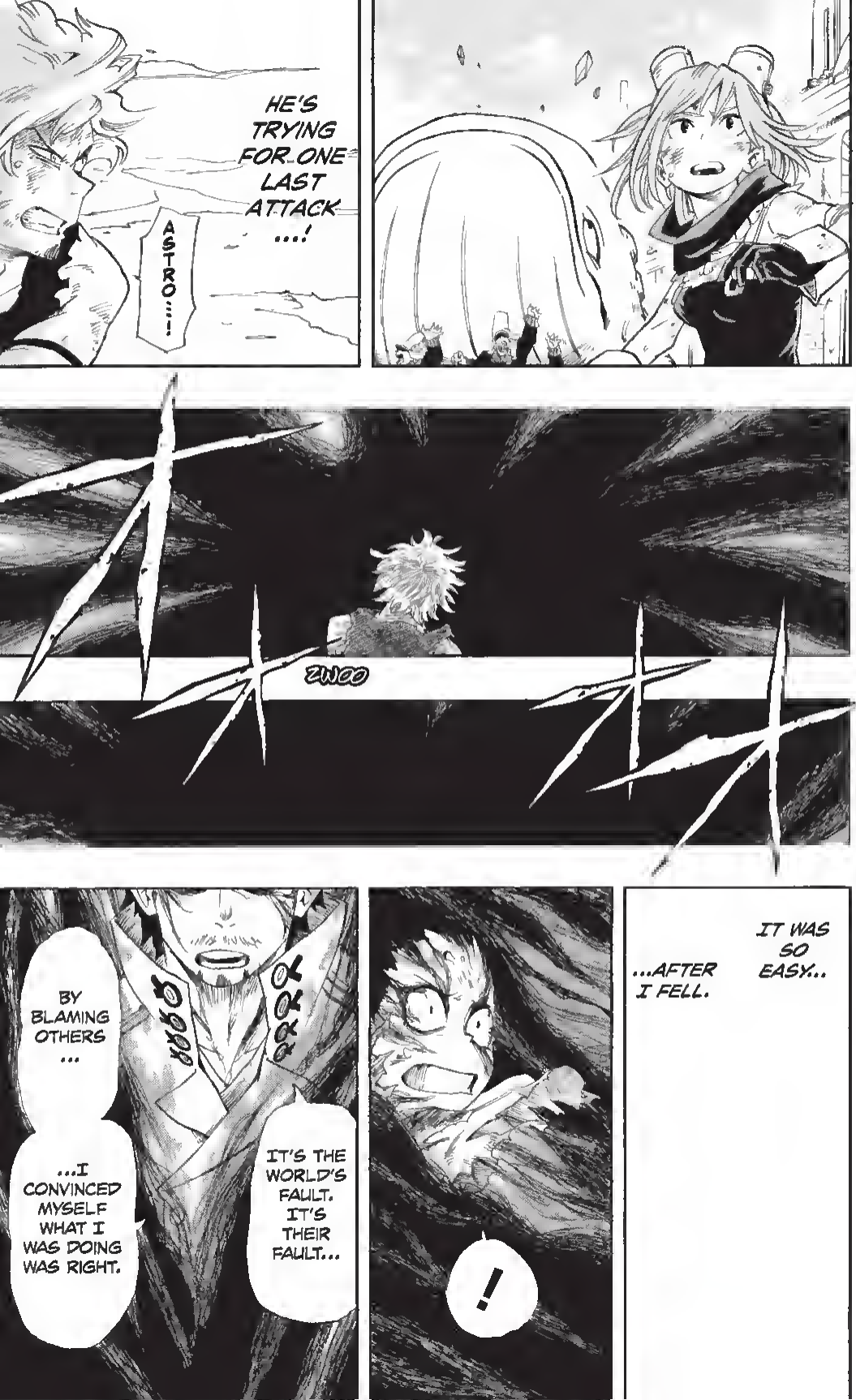
MOTOHIDE SHIMIZU
This guy is way more perverted than I ever imagined.
Such a perv!
He's a butt man.

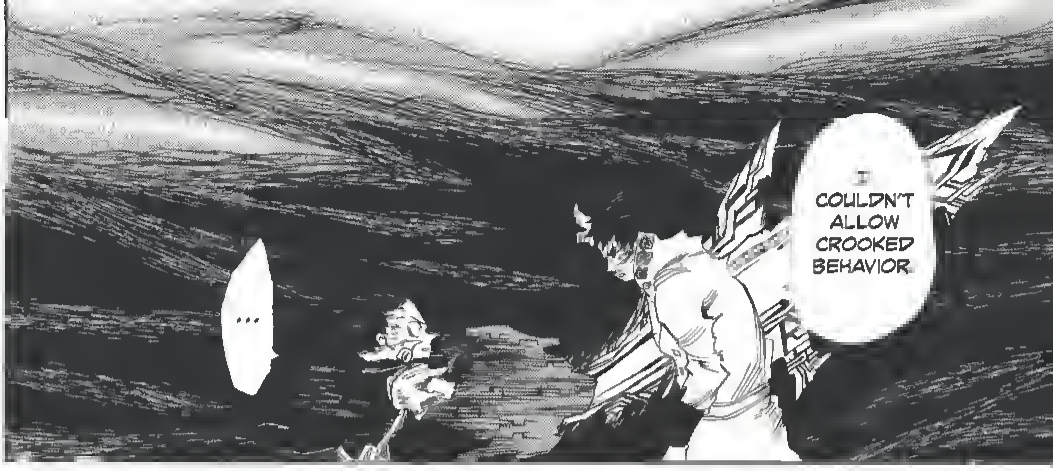
HIROYUKI FUJIYA
He's got a lot of fetishes.

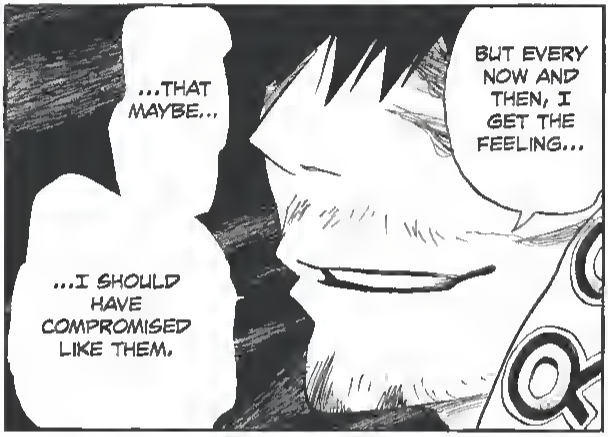
KAZUHIRO WATANABE
A breath of fres" air w" o does catchy drawings.
He dyed his heir recently
He has an armpit fetish.

WHY, BLACK...?!

Final Chapter: Astro of the Warring Planets


HE'S TRYING FOR ONE LAST ATTACK ...!
ASTRO...!!
ZWOO
BY BLAMING OTHERS ...
...I CONVINCED MYSELF WHAT I WAS DOING WAS RIGHT.
OOOH
OKOK
IT'S THE WORLD'S FAULT. IT'S THEIR FAULT...
!
...AFTER I FELL.
IT WAS SO EASY...


I COULDN'T ALLOW CROOKED BEHAVIOR.
...


BUT EVERY NOW AND THEN, I GET THE FEELING...
...THAT MAYBE...
...I SHOULD HAVE COMPROMISED LIKE THEM.

BUT SOON THE SYMBOL OF OUR STRENGTH WILL REAWAKEN!
AND THEY WERE CROOKED ...!

!!
WOOO

HEY.
ASTRO...
WHAT...

BLACK...

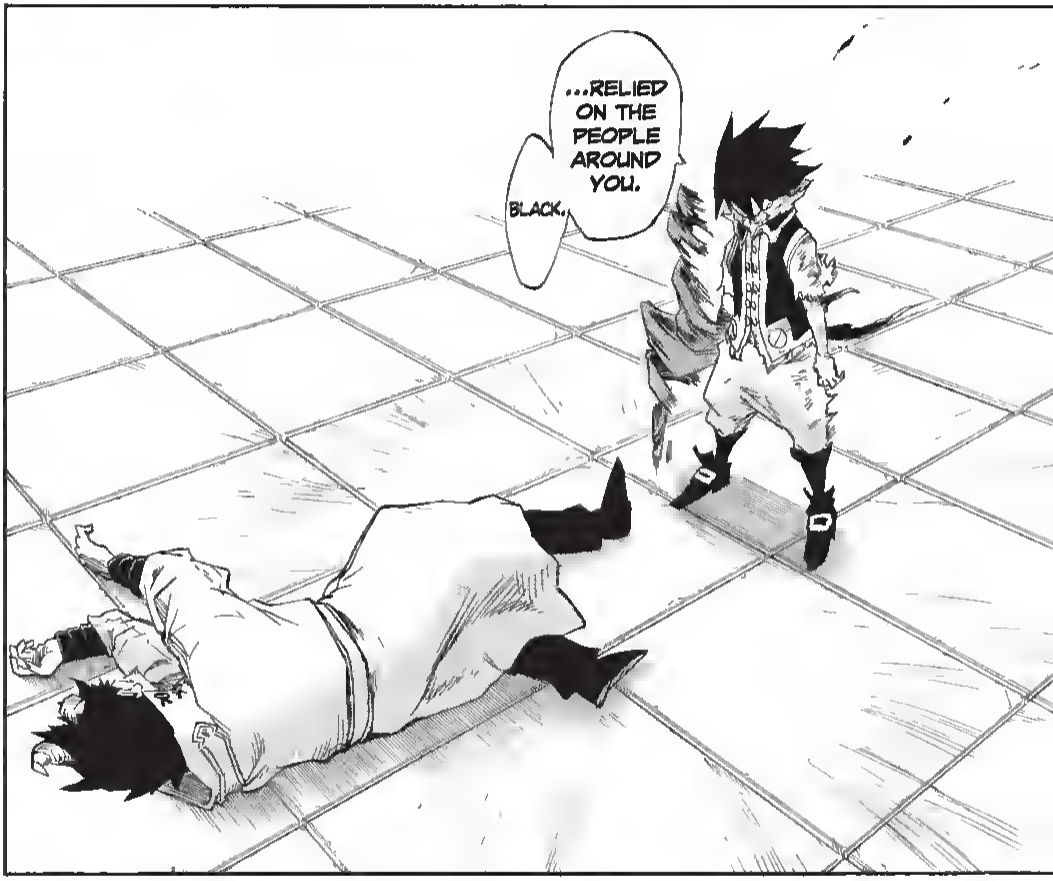
ズサ…
FWUMP...
...SHOULD I... HAVE DONE...?

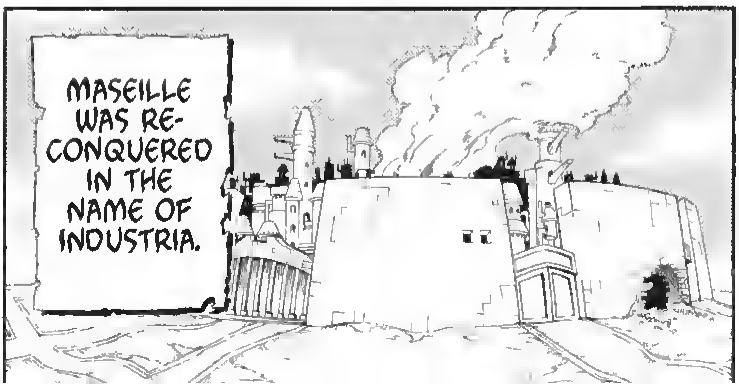
HE REALLY DID IT THIS TIME...!!
ASTRO ...!!

WHAT SHOULD YOU HAVE DONE...?
...
ハア…
HFF
ハア
HFF

...SHOULD HAVE...

YOU...


...RELIED ON THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU.
BLACK.


MASEILLE WAS RE-CONQUERED IN THE NAME OF INDUSTRIA.

GRP
"7"
"7"!!

THEY MADE A RUN FOR IT AS SOON AS THEIR BOSS WAS DEFEATED.
THE INVADERS HAVE BEEN CLEARED OUT OF THIS TOWN.
ズーン
DADUM
THIS SHOULD BE ALL OF 'EM ...
THE NEXT DAY...

ざわ
MURMUR
ざわ
MURMUR

I'M SORRY, OLD MAN...
I'LL HONOR YOUR LAST WORDS UNTIL THE DAY I DIE.

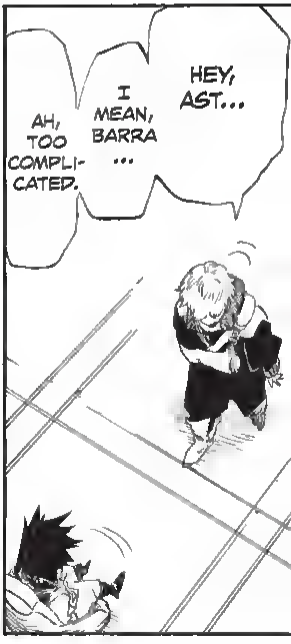
MILITARY FORCES BASE
FRONT OFFICE
...
YES.
VERY WELL. I UNDERSTAND...
HEY, WHAT DO YOU NORMALLY EAT?
BEEF STEW.
WOW, COOL!
SWIP
SWIP

...BITTEN THIS ARM OFF. BUT HE...
HE COULD HAVE EASILY..

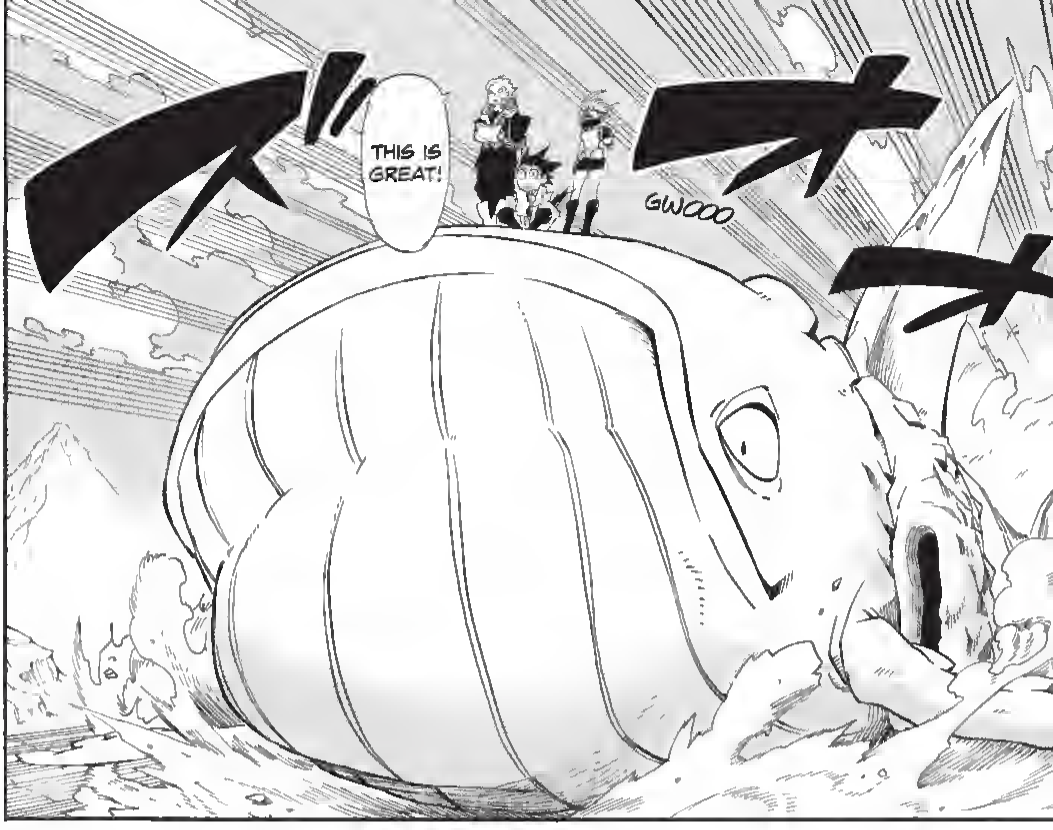
KRUHK...
ガチャ...
PHEW...

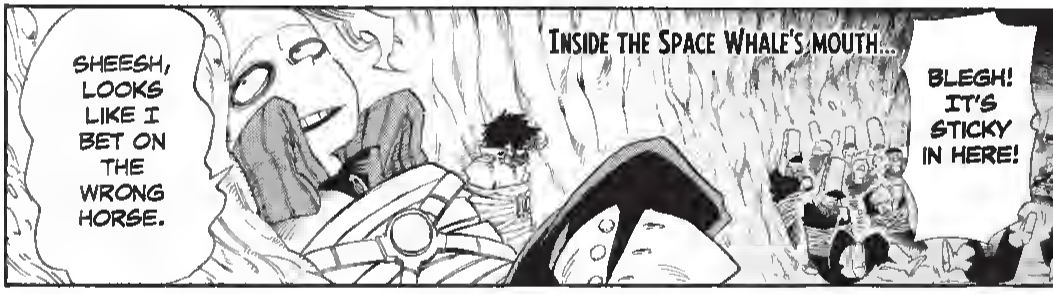
WHAT ?!
WE'RE RETURNING TO THE CASTLE.

YOUR HIGHNESS...! GET YOUR BAGS TOGETHER.


HEY, AST...
I MEAN, BARRA ...
AH, TOO COMPLI-CATED.

IF BLACK USED TO WORK UNDER HIS MAJESTY...
...THEN HIS FATE ISN'T OUR DECISION.
I'M GOING TO TAKE HIM TO THE CASTLE SO HIS MAJESTY CAN DECIDE ON A VERDICT.
I SEE ...
BUT... I'M NOT SURE HOW WE'LL TAKE ALL THESE GUYS WITH US...
Plus Tiko destroyed our carriage...
YOU NEED A RIDE?
!
MIRA.
IT'S RATHER FAR AWAY...
BUT IF YOU SAY SO, TIKO!


THIS IS GREAT!
GWOOO


INSIDE THE SPACE WHALE'S MOUTH...
SHEESH, LOOKS LIKE I BET ON THE WRONG HORSE.
BLEGH! IT'S STICKY IN HERE!

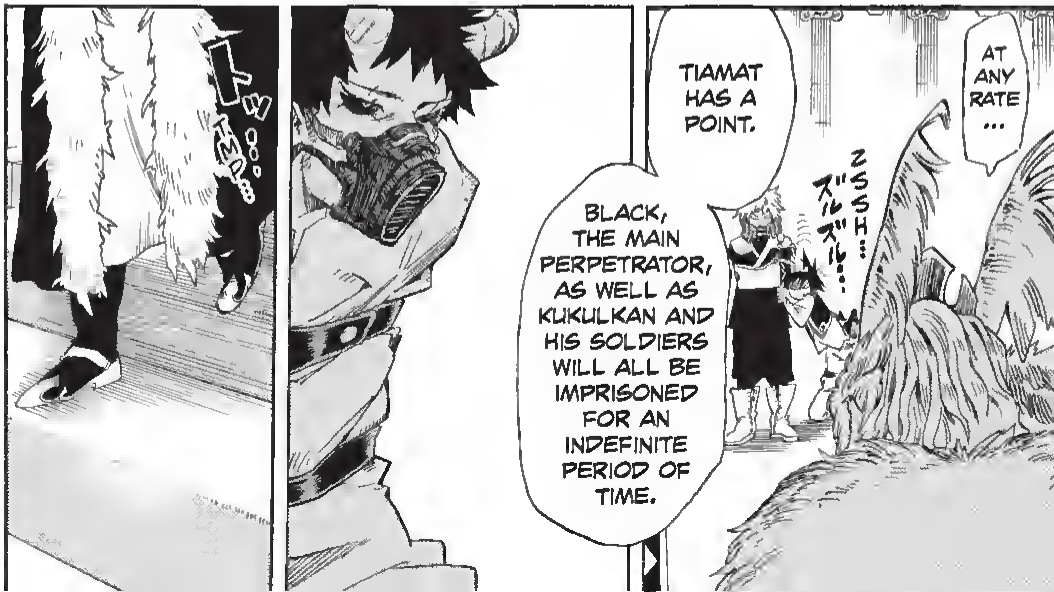
WOW, THE CASTLE TOWN IS HUGE.
WHERE'S THE KING?
TIKO. DO YOU REALLY EXPECT TO MEET THE KING?
YEAH, I WANNA SEE HIM.
OUT OF THE QUESTION! HAVE YOU NO SENSE OF PRO-PRIETY?!
C'MON! DIDN'T SHE SAVE YOU, TIAMAT?
...
THEN AT LEAST DO SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE BAWDY CLOTHES OF YOURS!!
NOW YOU'RE SAYING SOME-THING?!
SO THAT'S HOW YOU WERE LOOKING AT ME?
YOU BEARDY PERVERT! YOU'RE AWFUL!
NNH, SHUT UP! AND DON'T GET SO CLOSE TO ME!
しゅば"
VSH
YOU NEED TO SERIOUSLY THINK ABOUT DOING SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR FEAR OF WOMEN.

YOU INVADED MASEILLE, COVERED UP THE TRUTH, AND MASSACRED THE CITIZENS...
BADAM
ACCORDING TO THE LAW...
TREACHERY IS NOT A LIGHT SIN!
...HE SHOULD BE EXECUTED.
I NEVER IMAGINED YOU DOING SOMETHING LIKE THAT, BLACK.
SHUD...
SPEAK, TIAMAT.
PARDON MY RUDENESS, YOUR MAJESTY...
...BUT MAY I HAVE A WORD OR TWO OF MY OWN?
...

THE DARK ENERGY HE WIELDED WAS EXTREMELY POWERFUL...
...AND HE WAS A FORMIDABLE FOE TO DEFEAT.
THAT MAKES HIM EVEN MORE DANGER-OUS!
YES.
BUT THE SKILLS TO WIELD THAT ENERGY...
...CAN BE ATTAINED THROUGH TRAINING.
!
THIS IS A SKILL THAT WE TOO SHOULD LEARN TO USE!
IT WOULD BE WISE OF US TO CHOOSE TO UTILIZE HIS KNOW-LEDGE.
RE-GARDING PRINCE BARRAGE ...
IT IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SUBJECT, BUT HIGHLY IMPORTANT.
AND ONE MORE THING.
TIAMAT...!
DON'T MAKE HIM ATONE FOR HIS SINS WITH DEATH.
HE CAN ATONE BY CONTRIBUTING HIS KNOW-LEDGE!

TIAMAT!
BOOSH
HMFF ?!!!

WHY...?
?


AT ANY RATE ...
ZSSH... ズルズル...
TIAMAT HAS A POINT.
BLACK, THE MAIN PERPETRATOR, AS WELL AS KUKULKAN AND HIS SOLDIERS WILL ALL BE IMPRISONED FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD OF TIME.
トボ...
TMP...

ASTRO.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE PLACE OF BARRAGE.
I'M SORRY... YOU ENDED UP WOUNDED.
IT WAS WHAT I SHOULD HAVE DONE!
IT'S OKAY.
NO PROB-LEM!

WHY DID YOU STOP ME?
TAK
TAK
IT WAS ABOUT YOUR FAMILY. YOU'RE RELATED BY BLOOD TO HIM.
HMM ...
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PUT IT BUT ...
THE PRINCE THAT THE KING LOVED AND RAISED FOR THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS WAS THE OTHER GUY, RIGHT?
AND IT'S NOT GOING TO DO ANY GOOD TO TELL THE KING THAT THE PRINCE WAS A DUMMY.
IT'S NOT ABOUT WHO'S FAKE AND WHO'S REAL, OR EVEN ABOUT BLOOD.
CRRK...
HE WAS THE KING'S SON.

ASTRO?!
AND ...

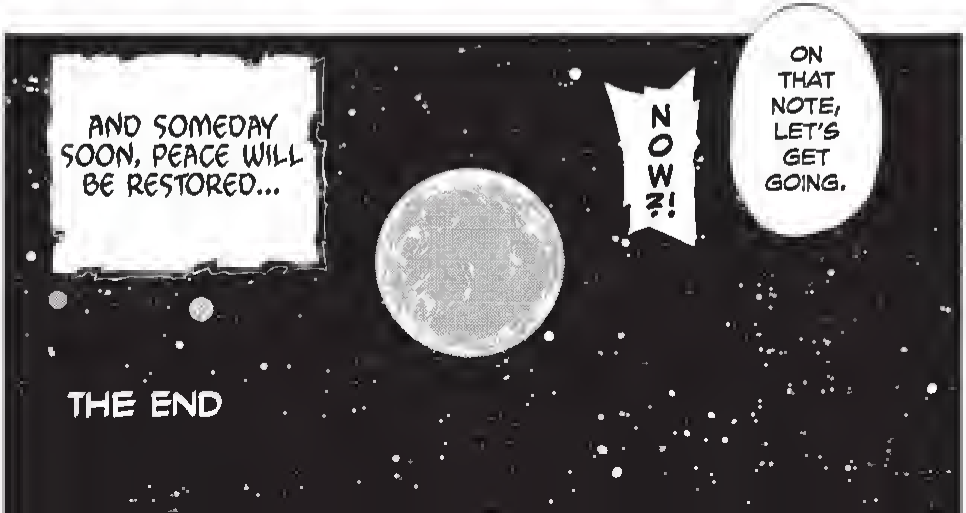
JUST LIKE HOW I MET BLACK AGAIN.
His body hasn't been found, after all.
...AND WE MIGHT BUMP INTO HIM SOMEWHERE AGAIN.
...HE MIGHT BE ALIVE ...
... JUST MAYBE ... MAYBE ...

PRINCE BARRAGE.
...BUT ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN ON THE LONG JOURNEY WE STILL HAVE AHEAD OF US.
I DON'T KNOW. I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE...

HE'S ASTRO!
RAAH
HE'S NOT PRINCE BARRAGE!

コホン!!
AHEM!
EXCUSE ME.

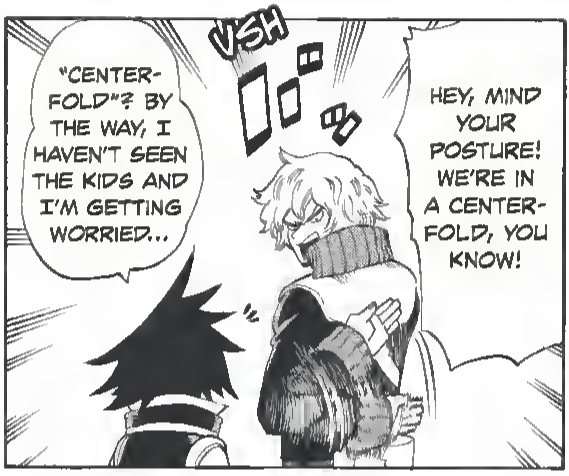
I'M GOING TO TRAIN YOU EVEN HARDER THAN BEFORE.
ASTRO!
YOU BET !!


ON THAT NOTE, LET'S GET GOING.
NOW?!
AND SOMEDAY SOON, PEACE WILL BE RESTORED...
THE END

Extra

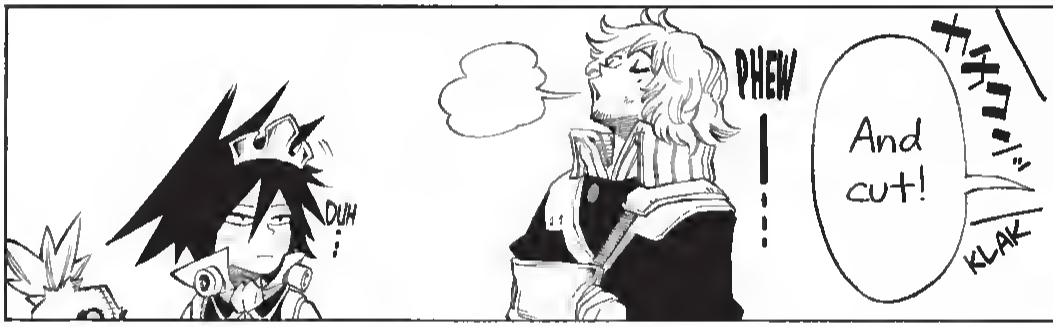
※The following ran as a centerfold in the summer 2012 issue of *Jump NEXT!* That's right, the "centerfold"...

After Astro's Family Moved into the Castle...


VSH
"CENTER-FOLD"? BY THE WAY, I HAVEN'T SEEN THE KIDS AND I'M GETTING WORRIED...
HEY, MIND YOUR POSTURE! WE'RE IN A CENTER-FOLD, YOU KNOW!

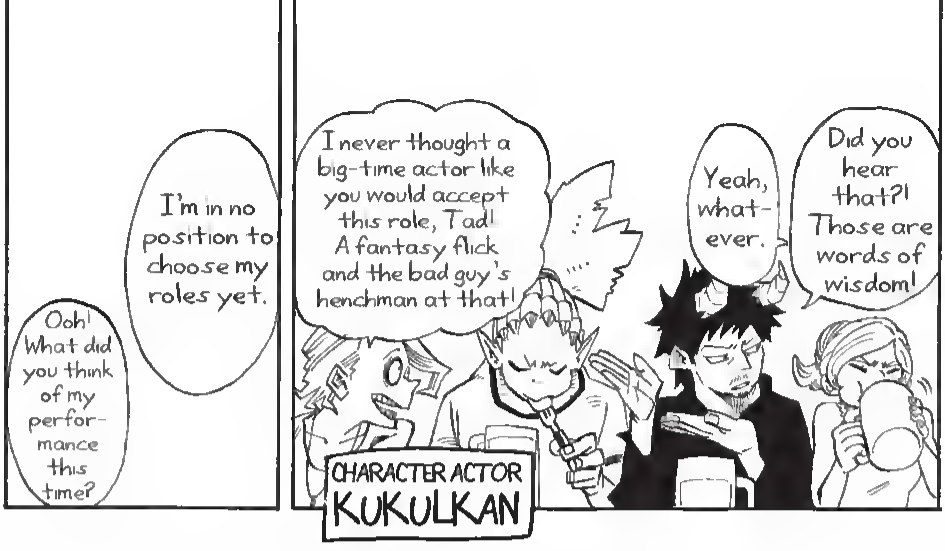
NUDE!
PSH
EEEK!!
PSHOOM
BBBBSH
BAM
STEAM!
BATH!
THIS HAPPENED THE NIGHT BEFORE THEY DEPARTED.
BSH
PSHOOM
SO THAT'S WHAT A CENTER-FOLD IS!
STUPID CENTER-FOLD.
I'm sorry!
THE END

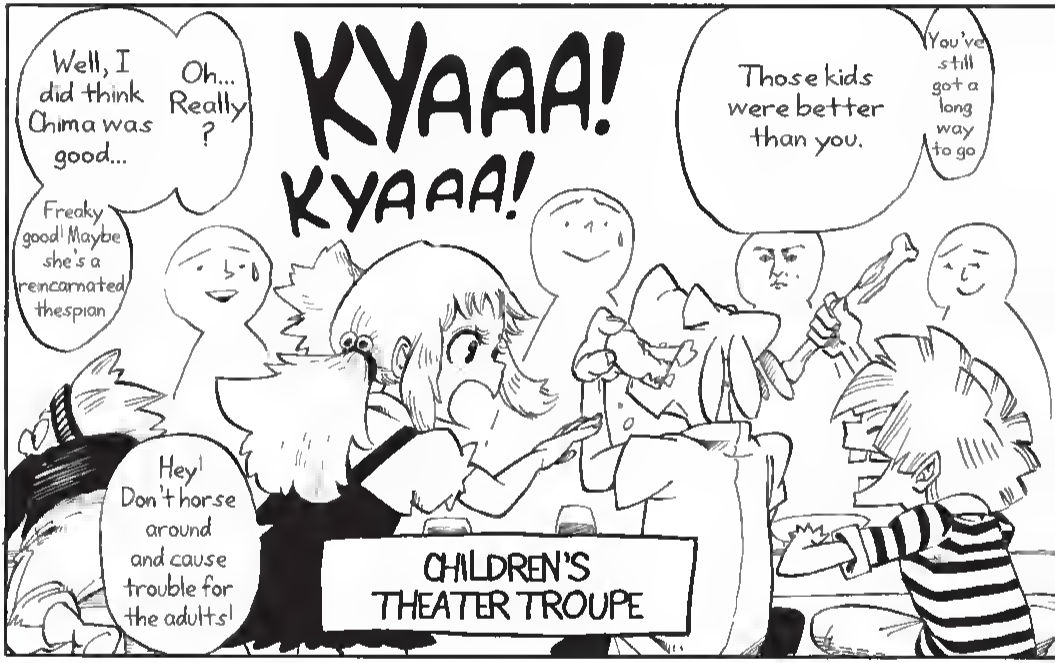
The Party from Hell Arc

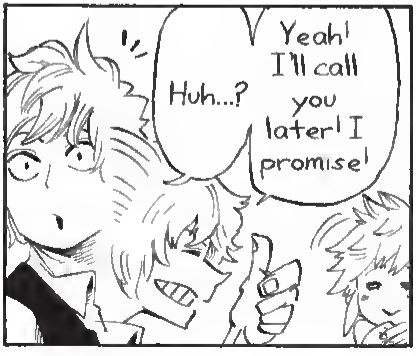


You never change, do you? You on screen and off is like day and night. You'll never be popular with girls with that attitude.
HA HA HA HA
Okay...
SWIP
You were great! We're going to have a wrap party so I'll contact you later.
TEEN HEART THROB TIAMAT
YOUNG PRODIGY ACTOR ASTRO

If you keep talking, my beer will lose all its foam.
VETERAN AWARD-WINNING ACTOR KING
All right, well, we've been through a lot, but I'd like to propose a toast from the bottom of my heart to everybody here and...
Pub
ガチン TINK
CHEERS!
Ooh, really? That would be great!
わい CHATTER
わい CHATTER
For real?! Give me your number and we can go together sometime soon
POP TV PERSONALITY NINA
Just give each and every scene ... your best performance.
VETERAN ACTOR TAD
Right? Maybe you could add something, Tad?
C'mon, don't be like that.
PEEK...
チラ
B-LIST ACTOR BLACK
This sucks.
Hey. I was told that I would have more scenes!
PIN-UP MODEL JINO


Ooh! What did you think of my performance this time?
I'm in no position to choose my roles yet.
I never thought a big-time actor like you would accept this role, Tad! A fantasy flick and the bad guy's henchman at that!
Yeah, whatever.
Did you hear that?! Those are words of wisdom!
CHARACTER ACTOR KUKULKAN

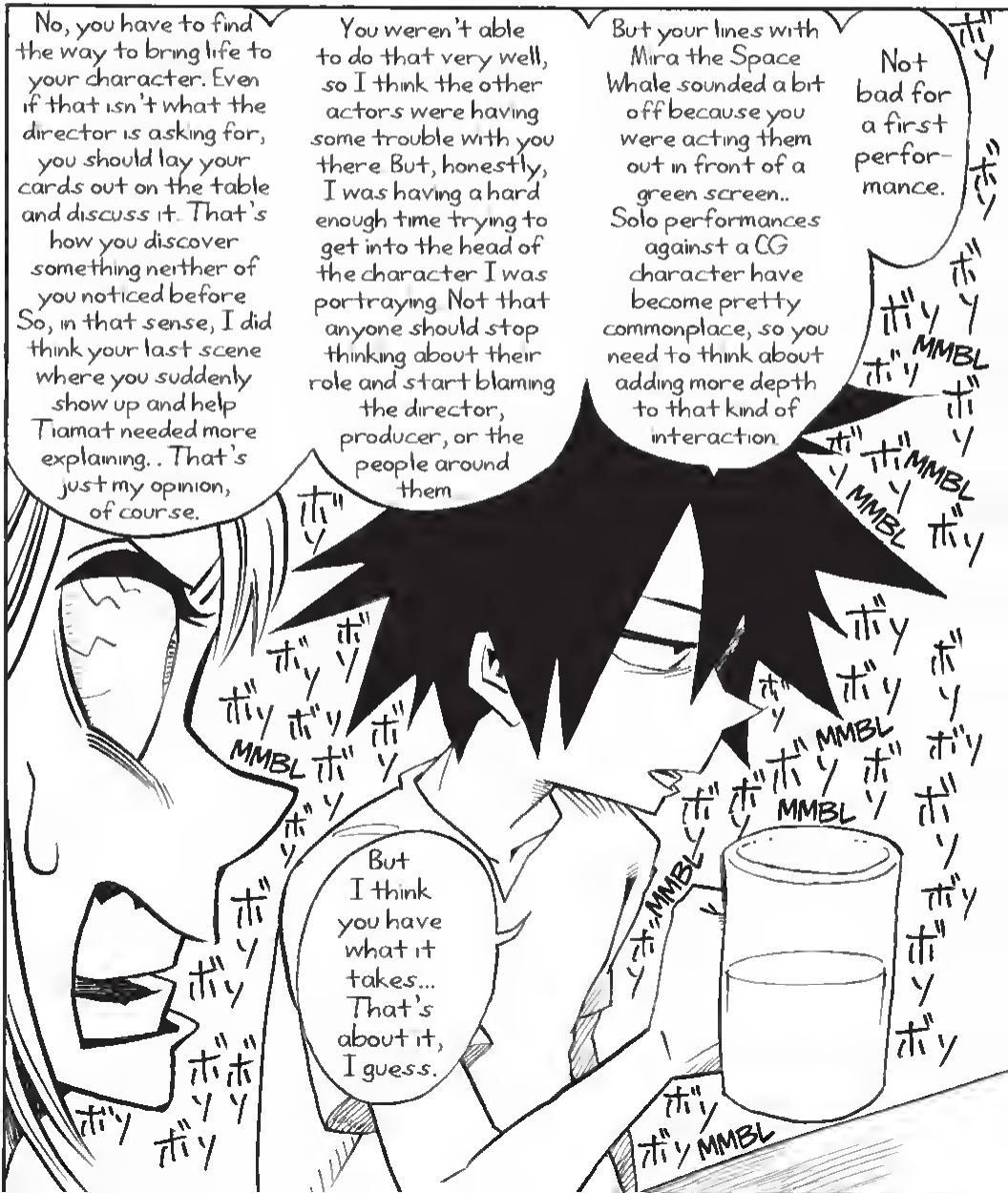

KYAAA!
KYAAA!
Well, I did think Chima was good...
Oh... Really?
Freaky good! Maybe she's a reincarnated thespian
Those kids were better than you.
You've still got a long way to go
Hey! Don't horse around and cause trouble for the adults!
CHILDREN'S THEATER TROUPE


Huh...?
Yeah! I'll call you later! I promise!

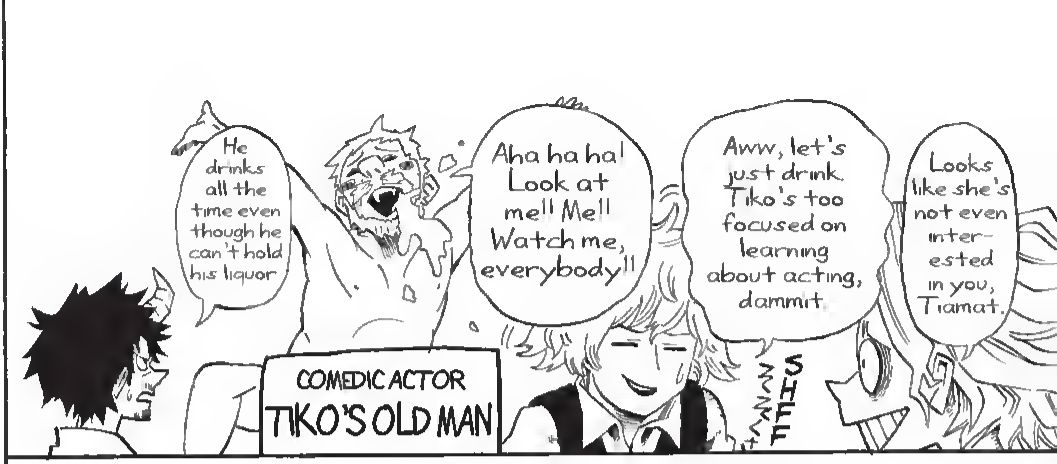
BAM
Let's play, Astro!!
BAM
Later...
But Astro outshone everybody! I can't believe he managed to take on two roles and change his facial expressions so dramatically...
It's like he was a different person.

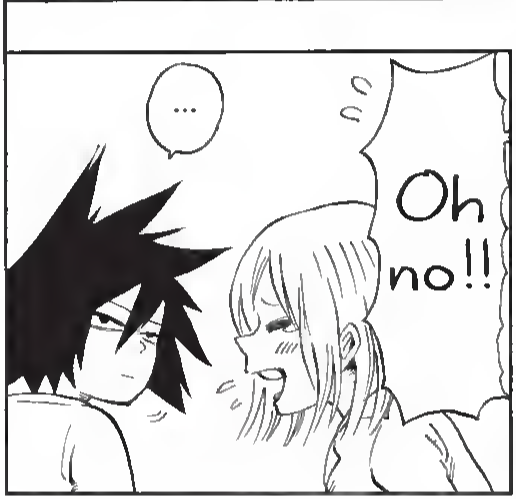
I'm still nervous...
I'm sorry... I just never really got used to the film world.
ROOKIE ACTRESS MAKING HER DEBUT
TIKO
HUH?!!
Tiko, why are you sitting all alone in the corner again?
ビクッ
SHUDDER
U-u-u-um, it was an honor to work with you.
If you don't mind, may I have a word or two of feedback about my performance?
But I'm so nervous...
And I... really wanted ta get ta knaw a certain persan here...
This is the last day, sa I have to try..
ピョイ
SHUP
ASTRO!!!
You mean me?! Oh, no problem I'm waiting with open ears whenever you're ready! Actually, I've always thought...

NOD
コクッ
Yes, tell me!!
Uh, but...
...in my personal opinion...
I don't think I'm an expert or anything...


Not bad for a first performance.
But your lines with Mira the Space Whale sounded a bit off because you were acting them out in front of a green screen.. Solo performances against a CG character have become pretty commonplace, so you need to think about adding more depth to that kind of interaction.
You weren't able to do that very well, so I think the other actors were having some trouble with you there. But, honestly, I was having a hard enough time trying to get into the head of the character I was portraying. Not that anyone should stop thinking about their role and start blaming the director, producer, or the people around them.
No, you have to find the way to bring life to your character. Even if that isn't what the director is asking for, you should lay your cards out on the table and discuss it. That's how you discover something neither of you noticed before. So, in that sense, I did think your last scene where you suddenly show up and help Tiamat needed more explaining.. That's just my opinion, of course.
But I think you have what it takes... That's about it, I guess.
ボソ
MMBL

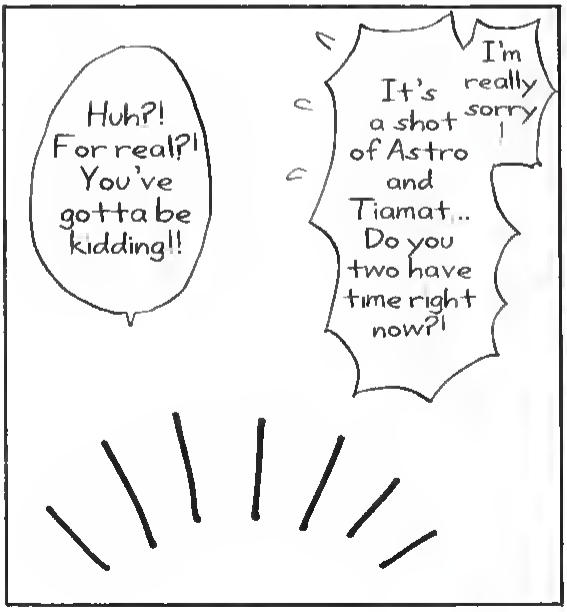
Sigh...
Don't be the party pooper!
Hey now, Astro. It's not nice to make a girl cry.
じわ
SOB
パァ
BLUSH...
That was so moving!
?!
Maybe you can give me some pointers, like in a one-on-one session...
Don't worry, Tiko. Your acting was way better than mine!!
スルー...
SHUP...
You're awful.
Really? That's how actresses hit on men?
Astro, that's enough! Can we enjoy the party, please?!
Don't be like me. I was trying to say that you should make an effort to totally inhabit the role you're performing and...
Thank you so much!! I'll try my hardest so one day I can be like you, Astro!


He drinks all the time even though he can't hold his liquor
COMEDIC ACTOR
TIKO'S OLD MAN
Aha ha ha! Look at me!! Me!! Watch me, everybody!!
Aww, let's just drink. Tiko's too focused on learning about acting, dammit.
SHEE
Looks like she's not even interested in you, Tiamat.


...
Oh no!!

Right...

MRMR
あいの
Don't worry about it It's over.
Really, I'm so sorry I caused you so much trouble
Ha ha ha..
あいの MRMR


Huh?! For real?! You've gotta be kidding!!
It's a shot of Astro and Tiamat.. Do you two have time right now?!
I'm really sorry!

I forgot to do the cover of volume 2!!!! And it's due today too

SIGH...
ギャーYAP
ギャーYAP
ギャーYAP!!!
Uh... That's impossible. We've already started drinking.
That's not a good idea, Mr. Director...
That sucks
スSHA...
I'll have to do it anyway, right?
VERBAL ABUSE
What a pro!!
Let's go, Tiamat !!!
スパーン
TA-DA!

Come on... Don't be too harsh on him
PAT...
Just quit directing.
Thank you, thank you! I'm so sorry!
But I already shaved off my beard
We can always add that with CG
And?! Where do we need to go?!

The Party from Hell Arc / The End

※ This is just a "what if"... I hope you don't hate AUs too much...

AFTERWORD

What the heck did I just draw? It reeks of the '90s, doesn't it? Like when a manga artist pops up inside their manga. This is what you get when you draw without sleeping or even thinking.

Anyway, thank you very much for reading *Barrage*.
"Thank you very much" is the only thing I can think of to say.
I'm really grateful. You have no idea how much your support matters...
I'm sorry. Thank you very much.

Okay, see you all around.
Oops, I mean I really hope to see you all again someday. Goodbye...

Kouhei Horikoshi

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